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The Mirror of Truth

And Other Stories

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THE DEPARTURE OF THE STORKS.

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THE

MIRROR OF TRUTH

AND OTHER

MARVELLOUS HISTORIES

BY

MRS. HAMERTON

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS BY C. O. MURRAY

SEELEY, JACKSON, AND HALLIDAY, FLEET STREET
LONDON. MDCCCLXXV.

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PREFACE.

NOBODY, I hope, will expect me to be an impartial critic of anything written by the author of this little volume, but, having been its first reader, I may be able to tell other readers something about the general character of its contents. Stories for children may be divided into three distinct classes. There is the story which amuses by the association of incongruous ideas, and is written simply to amuse; there is the story with a decided moral, written with the moral constantly in view; and, lastly, there is the story in which an audience of children would hardly suspect the existence of any definite moral, and yet an intelligent grown-up person who happened to be listening, would at once detect an undercurrent of criticism or satire which he would follow with interest, and

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which, indeed, to him, would be the most interesting ingredient in the composition. It will be found, I think, that most of the stories in this little series belong to the last of the three classes; one or two of them belong to the second, but not one of them belongs to the first. The author has always been appreciated as an oral story-teller by the children of her acquaintance, and, as I listened with the children, I found that there was something for me as well as for them, and that my private share of the entertainment was not the less interesting of the two. Perhaps in other houses than our own, now that the tales are printed, they may in like manner have an attraction for two audiences.

PHILIP GILBERT HAMERTON.

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THE

MIRROR OF TRUTH.

CHILDREN find means of playing and making themselves happy in all sorts of situations, even in those which seem most painful. Thus Lamy and Cladie, who were poor little foundlings without either father or mother, and whose present duty was to watch the sheep at Prenelay Farm, amused themselves more than if they had been a little prince and princess, and were as happy as it is possible to be at their age, partly, no doubt, because they loved each other with all their hearts, and managed to be continually together. They had been picked up in a great city by public charity, and put out to nurse at Prenelay Farm, and as

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every day Lamy became stronger and bolder, and Cladie more lively and skilful, the farmers liked them both, and kept them to be their servants, a charity which brought good fruit. As soon as they were five years old, the farmer gave each of them a long stick, and Cladie had to keep in order a large family of goslings, and Lamy a long flat-sided sow that was taller than himself. If little town children had had to fulfil this duty, they would have died of fear, for the mother geese hissed terribly when they were in a rage, and pulled at the shepherdess's little frock with their great bills to make her fall, or else they struck her little bare legs with their hard strong wings; happily, Cladie knew that Lamy was never very far off, and as soon as she called out he ran to her; and I assure you that he wasn't a bit afraid of the great geese, neither of their beaks nor of their wings, and they might hiss as much as they liked, poking out their necks, he whacked them till they left Cladie's petticoat alone, and then the two friends laughed together whilst their enemies took flight. At other times, Lamy's long

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sow set off into the woods, where she went to seek for muddy holes to wallow in, and then Cladie came to her friend's assistance and sent her good dog Finaud after the sow, for Finaud knew well enough how to bring her back by pinching her ears, without which Lamy would have been beaten in the evening by the farmer, who did not like to pay fines because his pigs went trespassing. As they grew up, the boy watched the oxen and cows, and the little girl watched the sheep, and that was a happy time for both of them! It is true, that in winter they set off for school long before daylight, and that they had to blow through their frozen fingers; but if Cladie felt too cold, Lamy opened his waistcoat so that she might put her little hands inside; and out of gratitude, she knitted him such a fine red comforter that he became an object of envy for all the other boys at the school, and they all asked their mothers or their sisters to knit them red comforters too; but the mothers were too busy, and the sisters were too clumsy, so Lamy's red comforter remained the only one in the school. In

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the spring, when the young and tender herbage gives the cows that good creamy milk which is taken at breakfast by rich children, and the good amber-coloured butter which is eaten with fine white bread, then the shepherds and shepherdesses keep the cattle in the pastures, and amuse themselves in their own way. You may be sure that they don't get the milk and butter, which can be sold, but only some cold potatoes, and porridge, and curds; then Lamy, who was the strongest, made a hole in the earth, and filled it with dry branches which he set on fire, and on them he put flat smooth stones which were heated. As soon as the branches were all in cinders, Cladie put leaves upon the stones, and cleverly poured thin maize porridge over them, which soon turned brown and golden, and made a capital cake that the two ate together, laughing and singing merrily; they knew how to cook apples and chestnuts in their season; they buried medlars and wild pears in the hay, and took them out soft and ripe; they knew where to gather nuts and wild strawberries, and blackberries in the bushes, and mushrooms in

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the meadows. They knew the rivulets that were full of cray-fish, and the nests of birds of prey. Cladie would not permit any harm to be done to innocent birds, and Lamy respected her wishes. They went both together noiselessly to admire the nightingales and young thrushes, so bold and tame that they perched within easy reach; but the boy took his revenge in eagerly hunting after sparrow-hawks, buzzards, owls, and magpies, climbing audaciously to the tops of the highest trees and the roofs of old abandoned farm-houses to destroy their eggs. If the heat was too great to run about much, Cladie made baskets with rushes and osiers, and Lamy made whistles and fifes from branches of sapling willow. He took off the bark all in a piece, after having beaten and wetted it, and then he pierced it with holes. On this rustic flute he repeated the dance music that the minstrel played at the marriage-feasts, at christenings, and at village merry-makings. Some years later, when they were able to read, this pleasure of reading became their favourite one.

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Unfortunately, they had few books at their disposal; but they kept all their savings to buy ballads with coloured illustrations from the pedlar, and when the pedlar had gone his way, Lamy, being the more learned of the two, read them over and over again to Cladie, till she knew them by heart, and sang them in the evening. It is easy to narrate their simple life and their innocent pleasures, but it is not so easy to make other people understand how these two loved each other. Always together, having neither parents nor friends, they were everything to one another, and if any lad came to tease Cladie he was sure of being paid off, for Lamy was not afraid of using his fists, and was very ready to take offence where she was in any way concerned, for she alone had watched him in his fever. The master, in fear of contagion, had sent him to sleep in a stable, and left him there on the straw, but Cladie came, and without thinking of herself, covered him up when he had a shivering, wiped his forehead that was all in perspiration, and gave him to drink; he would have died without her, died of

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ennui, weakness, and discouragement; but she kept him company, she helped him to walk, to go out a little in his convalescence, she formed projects which were realized after his recovery, interested him in life, and cured him. Then it was that he reflected for the first time what his existence would have been without his friend, and he began to fear that he would lose her some day, and be separated from her; and he asked her whether she loved him better than every one else in the world, and she answered, "Yes;" and he exacted the promise that she would never forget him whatever happened, and she answered, "Never!"

They went on living in this way till the girl was thirteen years old and the boy fourteen, but Lamy was soon obliged to take the oxen to the plough, and he was so proud of showing his strength and courage that just at first he did not perceive how long a time he passed away from Cladie; he used to meet her again in the evening at the farm, and the poor girl, seeing how happy he was, did not confess that she found herself very lonely, and sometimes cried

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by herself. However, this first satisfaction of Lamy's vanity was soon over, and he discovered that he could not talk with any one as he talked to Cladie; and towards autumn, when the days shorten and the twilight falls early in the evening, he went to seek for her in the pasture, under pretext of helping her to bring back her flock to the fold. Sometimes he did not get there first, and the place by the side of the shepherdess was occupied by one of his comrades, and then he became taciturn and ill-humoured, in spite of all Cladie's kind and gentle words. He did not like, either, to hear anybody say that she was pretty, and yet he would have beaten anybody who had said the contrary; but with or without his consent, Cladie was already spoken of as the beauty of the village.

Autumn had given place to winter, the snow covered mountains and valleys, the wind blew sharp and biting, and that night Cladie assembled her flock sooner than usual, because Lamy had come to seek for her. The great gate of the pasture was wide open, and they

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sent Finaud after the loiterers: but Finaud, contrary to his custom, did not obey; with hair erect, snuffing the wind that came from the side of the wood, he growled low and suspiciously. "Go, Finaud! go!" said Cladie, "fetch them, fetch them!" but Finaud now trembled in all his limbs, with his tail between his legs, and uttered plaintive howlings. "He smells a wolf!" cried Cladie to Lamy, "let us run away!" but, before she had finished, an enormous wild beast leaped into the midst of the flock, which scattered itself mad with fear, and seizing a lamb, carried it away towards the wood. Lamy had no weapon; but being bold and an excellent runner he did not hesitate an instant, took his clogs in his two hands and rushed at full speed after the wolf to make him loose hold of the lamb. He kept the wild beast well in view, for it felt sure of being sufficiently in advance, and stopped from time to time to lay down its burden and take a little rest, resuming its flight as soon as ever it apprehended any danger from Lamy. The boy was evidently gaining ground upon the wolf, but at the same

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time he was losing himself, without perceiving it, in the very heart of the forest, and night was coming on rapidly.

Soon he stumbled against something in his path, and, on stooping to look at it, discovered that it was the body of the lamb strangled by the wolf and abandoned by it to lighten its course. As the pursuit had no longer any object, Lamy thought about regaining the farm, and was going to retrace his steps, when the rays of the new moon which pierced through the branches discovered to him a scene which struck him with surprise, and caused him to change his resolution. Stretched upon the moss, and apparently plunged in a deep sleep, a young female figure was reposing, on the edge of a natural well, little dreaming that a ferocious animal was so near. The moon was reflected in a mirror laid near her, the brilliancy of which had first attracted Lamy's attention. On seeing the risk that was run by this beautiful and imprudent person, the youth made a great effort, and came up with the wolf just in time

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to save the life of the sleeper. This time the animal made no attempt to retreat farther, but, turning suddenly against his pursuer, prepared for the attack, showing his long and hungry teeth and growling savagely. With an astonishing promptitude and precision, Lamy gave him a violent stroke with the clog exactly in the middle of the head, between the two ears, then, seeing him stunned by this vigorous attack, without giving him time to come to himself he redoubled his strokes, without being frightened by the howlings of rage and pain that the beast now uttered in his agony. A last stroke on the temple laid him dead at the feet of the young woman, who was roused by the noise and stood upon her feet. " I owe you my life," she said immediately to Lamy, " and in return I should be glad to give you something as a testimony of gratitude ; unfortunately, men prize but little whatever comes from me, and they reject me everywhere when I present myself, so that I am reduced, as you perceive, to take refuge in utter solitude." Lamy looked upon and listened to this austerely beautiful

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person with as much surprise as admiration; the noblest simplicity reigned in her aspect and in her manner; it was difficult to conceive why she was rejected by mankind. She went on,—"You are still so young, that perhaps I may be able to make you a present that may be of some use to you. Take this mirror, it has the singular property of showing people such as they are, so that few recognize themselves in it; whenever you wish to assure yourself of the sincerity of any one, put it into his hands, and immediately, whether he be rich or poor, humble or powerful, he will be compelled to express his most secret thoughts. Adieu!" continued the beautiful lady, giving the mirror to Lamy, "my name is TRUTH." Then she descended into the clear and deep well on the borders of which she had slumbered, and he who had saved her might have fancied himself the dupe of an illusion or a dream if he had not held in his hands *The Mirror of Truth.* Nevertheless, he attached little value to this gift, for at that time he did not yet appreciate all its merits, for he thought it quite natural

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that people should express their real thoughts, and did not see that it could be of any importance to be able to compel them to do so. However, the mirror was pretty, and he put it in his pocket, intending to make a present of it to Cladie, that she might look at herself in it. He had observed that at the village feasts the girls seemed to wish for such things, and often accepted them from their lovers.

After this he thought he would go back at once, as his friend might be greatly disquieted by his long absence, and fancy that some evil chance had befallen him with the wolf; but, after having looked all about him, he really could not make a guess in which direction might be Prenelay Farm. He walked a long time as chance guided, yet it seemed to him that instead of getting out of the forest he got deeper and deeper into it, and that it was thicker and thicker. He felt weary of his long walk, and wearied too by his battle with the wolf, besides which he began to be excessively hungry. "I shall be compelled to pass the night here," he thought, and already prepared to stretch him-

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self upon the dry fern that he had gathered together, when he fancied he heard the sound of an instrument, and of little bells jingling a good way off. He listened attentively, and remained convinced that he could not be very far off the edge of the wood, and that they were dancing, no doubt, in some farm at the sound of the music. He immediately directed his steps to where the sound came from, and walked a long time before he heard anything more distinctly; but, coming to an opening in the wood, he perceived in the distance a scene not less strange than the first, though very different from it. Round about a circle formed by men, who were seated on the ground, resinous torches were burning at regular distances. An immense tent or marquee, with the walls lifted up like curtains, served as a shelter, and upon a magnificent Turkey carpet a little creature with long unfastened hair and a short red petticoat, with bare arms, legs, and shoulders, jumped and turned rapidly like a teetotum to the sound of a tambourine, which she shook gracefully over her dark head. The men applauded the

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little dancer enthusiastically, and their bravos doubled her ardour. Her feet scarcely touched the ground, her body curved and straightened itself again, flexible as a spring of steel, and her long black hair surrounded her like the veil of night. The bells of the tambourine resounded as they were rapidly shaken by a hand feverish with impatience, and very soon the instrument was flung to a distance by the little performer, who, stopping suddenly in the middle of a waltz, cast herself to the ground in ill-humour. "What is the matter with thee, my treasure?" immediately cried the tallest man in this strange company, running towards the child, whom he lifted in his arms with a passionate tenderness.

"It doesn't amuse me to dance all by myself," answered the little girl, in a sulky tone. "I want somebody to play with me."

Just at this minute Lamy arrived near these people, whom he took for a family of gipsies bivouacking in the forest. So soon as the light of the torches fell upon him, all the men sprang to their feet and surrounded him with eager

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anxiety; and he was not put quite at his ease by their strange reception and their wild looks. He told them that he had been lost in the forest whilst following a wolf, and that he wished to find a lodging for the night. The little girl had come quite close to him, and looked at him with a curiosity that she did not in the least attempt to conceal. Having finished this inspection, she took him by the hand and said, "Come to where we live, nobody will do you any harm, and you shall play with me, and nobody shall trouble you. Shall it not be so, father?"

"As you please, Hadjina."

"You hear, the rest of you," said she, in a hard and imperious tone; "you've nothing to do with him, he belongs to me."

The men bowed their heads with a sort of respect, and returned to their games of dice and cards, and to their glasses set upon the grass, whilst Lamy went away with Hadjina. They were soon near a big stone covered with dry grass and newly-cut fir branches; the little girl pressed with her foot one end of the stone,

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which gave way like the trap-door of a cellar, and she immediately slipped through the opening, dragging her guest after her; but the guest did not follow her very easily in this complete darkness, and down such a steep incline. Touching the walls, he felt the coldness of the stone, and was convinced that he was going into a subterranean passage, but why? He had not the time to give himself up to long reflections, for the little girl, put out of patience by his slowness, said, "What! can't you walk yet, at your age? You stumble at every step."

"I can walk as well as anybody in plain daylight," answered Lamy, rather put out, "but I am neither an owl nor a bat, to be able to see in the dark."

"No more am I!" said she, bursting out laughing, "and yet I can run about here as fast as I like without stopping, and so will you when you're used to it." Lamy thought to himself that this accomplishment was not positively indispensable to him, and that as soon as the daylight came he would be off to Prenelay Farm, to put an end to Cladie's anxiety; but he

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did not answer. He perceived a feeble ray of red light, and after a sudden turn stopped short, dazzled by the brilliance of a great fire of fir-wood that crackled and sent little rockets in every direction.

"Grandmother!" exclaimed the little girl, immediately, to a woman seated by the fire, who looked just like an old sorceress, "here's my prisoner, you are to be kind to him; father said that he gave him to me to amuse myself."

The old woman muttered something that Lamy couldn't understand; but the language of Hadjina seemed very strange to him, and so did the word "prisoner" that she applied to him. Nevertheless, he took that for a jest, and tried to get rid of his anxieties.

"Are you hungry?" inquired the girl.

"Yes, very hungry;" answered Lamy, whose robust appetite did not easily put up with the omission of a meal.

"Very well; I've no maize cakes to give you, but we will have a little dinner together;" and, with a charming grace and vivacity, she took out of a cupboard a roasted hare on a silver

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dish that was not over clean; partridges in an old cracked soup-plate; preserves in a bulged chalice of silver-gilt, and many kinds of cake that she threw in a heap on the table. "What wine do you drink?" she asked.

"I never drink wine at all," he replied, simply.

The little girl opened her great eyes in astonishment. "Is it because you don't like it?" she said.

"Yes, but I do; only they never give me any at the farm."

"Really! Well, I will give you wine every day, and as much as ever you like, and father's wine too; he does everything I ask him to do." And whilst she said this she brought a bottle with a long neck, carefully sealed. "Drink!" she went on, "and if you don't think it good, I will give you some of another kind."

Lamy had never been at such a feast, and everything seemed delicious to him; only he thought the service very strange, for he and Hadjina ate together in silver-gilt plates, but they had no forks, and were obliged to use

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their fingers. At Prenelay Farm there had been iron forks, which were a great deal more convenient. "Perhaps it's the fashion of their country," he said. At last weariness and sleep overcame him, and he begged Hadjina to tell him where he might go to sleep. She took him into another room which looked like a store, he thought, and showing him a great roll in a corner,—"Take this carpet," she said, "put it on the ground and lie down upon it; as for me, I shall lie down, I'm sleepy too." Then she told her grandmother to hang a hammock for her, and rolled herself in a superb quilt of satin, but which was faded and covered with spots; and so she slept in her hammock whilst her prisoner slept delightfully on his thick warm carpet.

On awaking he thanked Hadjina for her hospitality, and begged her to show him the road to Prenelay Farm; but, with a slightly embarrassed air, she informed him that he must not think about going away, and that her father had given orders for him to remain with her. He grew angry at this, and said that he would get

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away without her help; but she answered that he did not know the secret for opening the trap-door, and that the entrance was always guarded. He rushed off into the subterranean passage to try to get out, and she let him lose himself, only accompanying him by her mocking laugh, so at last he was forced to come back and admit that he was a prisoner; but what could be the reason for keeping him? To all his questions Hadjina gave the same answer—that it was her father's will, and that she knew nothing more about it; and then she invited Lamy to play with her, and amuse her to pass the time, and she assured him that he would be very happy if he were kind to her and did as she wished, because her father would be grateful. "Hidden behind big trees," she went on, "I have often watched you when you amused that little shepherdess whilst I was all by myself, and had no one to play with me; make me whistles and flutes of willow, such as you made for her, and teach me to make rush baskets." Lamy thought that to gain his liberty he would have to obey this little despot, and for some days he obeyed

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all her behests. She was nearly thirteen years old, but seemed much younger on account of her small stature, her complete ignorance of life, and her childish ways. "You think of nothing but going away," she said one day to Lamy, sobbing; "you don't love me; well, I shall tell my father, and, if I choose, he will chain you up, and beat you, and kill you; do you hear, you bad one?" At other times she had recourse to little attentions and caresses; she brought for his repast the best of everything that she could find, observing that he never had such good things at the farm, and Lamy certainly enjoyed them now. She often made him presents, and he on his part wondered how she could ever have had such things in her possession. She had given him a magnificent poniard with a silver damaskeened hilt, a beautiful gold watch and chain, a ring adorned with a big diamond, saying all the time, "Take, take, I've lots of other such things." Although she went out herself sometimes, she never would permit Lamy to leave the subterranean dwelling, and though he had now been there a whole

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month he had only seen one man, Hadjina's father, who had only addressed a few words to him to recommend him not to displease his daughter if he cared for his life; for this man saw nothing in Lamy but a mere plaything to amuse his child.

"When will you let me out?" he asked his little jailer one day.

"As soon as I know that you cannot leave me," she answered, decisively. She spoke of the delights of an existence passed without labour, and in continual amusement; and, to win him completely, she offered to show him the wealth that he would share, "for," said she, "my father told me that all belonged to me." Then she took him to a separate part of the cavern and opened a secret door and displayed quantities of riches and precious things heaped together. There were boxes full of coined silver and gold, there were jewels, rich stuffs, carpets, hangings, clothes, church ornaments, linen, and lace,—all that heaped together without order and without care, evidently worth an enormous amount, as

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Lamy supposed, without knowing the particular value of each thing. He began to get accustomed to this life of good eating and drinking, and perfect idleness; to the affectionate ways of little Hadjina, who made herself gentle and considerate with him—she who was so despotic and so hard to every one else; his vanity was flattered by this difference, and what a fortune lay before him! He was not very far from thinking that it would be agreeable enough to pass his life so if he got his liberty, nor was he far either from paying the price she asked for it.

The evening of the day when Hadjina had shown him her wealth, she danced for him with castanets, because she knew that it would amuse him, and to rest herself when she was tired she came to sit on his knees. All at once a fancy entered her head. "You have never given me anything," she said, "not even a souvenir."

"It was because I had nothing."

"Nonsense; one has always something when one cares to give pleasure;" and she began to look sulky.

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"I assure you, Hadjina, that if I had anything which could give you any pleasure, you should have it immediately."

"Let me see!" and she began to examine the contents of Lamy's pockets, without finding anything in them but what she herself had given him.

"I can give you *back* one of the things that you have given me yourself," he said, laughing, "for want of something better."

"Ah! I've got hold of something—I've got hold of something," she cried in triumph, jumping to the ground and clapping her little hands with joy.

"What can that be?" asked he in astonishment.

"A mirror!—yes, really! and a very pretty mirror too! I must have a look at myself—but it is not myself that I see!" cried Hadjina in amazement; "it alters strangely, and yet it is still the same face. Oh, how funny it is! Here's a little sulky girl with such an ill-tempered look, and now she is red with rage and stamps with her foot! how ugly she is like

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that, if she could but see herself!" and Hadjina, without recognizing herself, thus watched her own features under different aspects and in her different humours. Lamy then remembered what the beautiful giver of the mirror had said to him, and he wished to ascertain whether his little jailer would be forced to answer his questions frankly, now that she held between her hands the *Mirror of Truth!* "Hadjina," said he, "tell me for what reason you keep me here, and what your father intends to do with me."

"He won't let you go from the fear that you might tell what you have seen here, and my father expects you to join his troop and help him in his enterprises when you are older," replied the little girl, still amusing herself by looking in the glass. "Now just look at that little coquette!" she went on, "what airs and graces she is studying! Why did you never tell me that you had such a pretty plaything?"

"I didn't think about it, and, indeed, I believed that it was a mirror like any other . . . but, Hadjina," he went on, for he wanted to know the truth before she was weary of her

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THE MIRROR OF TRUTH.

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new amusement and gave it up, "what are your father's enterprises—what does he do?"

"He has, as you have seen, a troop of men under his orders, and he posts them at night on the borders of the forest near the road, in order to catch travellers. When any of them pass, he makes them give up what they have upon themselves and in their carriages; and when my father has chosen the prettiest things for me, he shares the rest with his men, and whatever belongs to us is placed in the cavern that I have shown you. Sometimes, in winter, when travellers are more rare, he goes farther away on his expeditions; but on these occasions my father always tells me how long his absence will last, so that I may not be anxious, nor my grandmother either, and he always brings me back what I have asked for, but he never will let me accompany him, because I am little. When I grow big and strong, I shall put a pair of pistols in my belt, and a great poniard, and with my mother's little carbine I shall go on expeditions, as she used to do, for I'm not at all afraid of hearing guns go off, not I! I want to learn

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to shoot as well as my mother did, for I'm told that she never missed her man. It was she who taught me to dance."

Lamy was struck with horror by these open revelations that Hadjina's frankness had made to him. So it was quite true, as he had begun to suspect since he had been taken into the cavern which contained the wealth, he was in the midst of a band of thieves, and they expected to compel him to join them. Plunged in grave reflection, he did not at first perceive that the little girl had already left the mirror for her favourite game, which consisted in throwing sharp knives at a target, and which she managed with a marvellous address and certainty of hand. She soon called Lamy to contend with her at this, and then he discovered that she retained no recollection of the revelations she had just made whilst holding the *Mirror of Truth.* So he thought it would be wise to make no allusion to it, promising himself to make the best of the times when she might return to it, to learn whatever he might think necessary.

The evening of the same day he distinctly

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heard overhead the hasty steps of horses, the rattle of fire-arms, the ferocious cries of a death-struggle. "Hadjina!" he could not help saying at last, "what can be the matter? people are killing one another over our heads;" but Hadjina was accustomed to such things, and did not trouble herself at all, and the old grandmother was too deaf to know what was going on. The child tried several times to interest Lamy in some sort of a game; and, vexed to see that he would only pay attention to what was going on outside, she got into a great rage, and threw upon the ground all the things that happened to be within her reach. In the midst of this scene of childish anger, steps were heard in the subterranean passage, and voices also, one of which scolded rudely, and the other spoke with an utterance half-choked with weeping, and soon Hadjina's father came pushing before him a young boy, thin and pale, who seemed to be paralyzed with fear. "Your Highness," said the brigand, in a tone of mockery, "this will be your apartment for some days; you will, perhaps, not find it

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quite so sumptuous as the one you have been accustomed to, but I hope that your father will give us the wherewithal to embellish it, for your sake."

"Let me go away, if you please, Mister Thief!" pleaded the pale child in the midst of his tears, "and I will give you whatever you please."

"That is to say, six yards of new cord round my neck, my lord, many thanks to you," replied the brigand, with a terrible laugh, whose echoes reverberated in the subterranean passage as he went away. As soon as he had disappeared, courage seemed to come back to the new captive, who advanced towards Hadjina with a lofty air, and said with a tone of command, "You little gipsy, I am the Prince Hercules Achilles Hector, the only son of the reigning sovereign, and whatever is in my father's dominions owes me obedience; so go at once to the Court, to say that the Master of the Horse must send me my guards and my carriage, as I cannot stop here; it is very ugly and very dirty, and I am sick of it already."

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"If you are nothing better than a Prince," replied the gipsy girl, scornfully, "it is you who are under my orders. I am Queen here, and you will have to do whatever I choose; and, to begin, you are going to give me that pearl pin which holds your cravat, it will do capitally in my hair. . . . What? will you not give it me nicely; very well, I shall call my father, who brought you here, and we shall soon see if you still dare to answer me with a *no* when he is here."

"Oh, if you care so much for it, here it is!" said the Prince Hercules Achilles Hector, precipitately; "it is useless to call your father."

"This is more satisfactory," said Hadjina, fastening a lock of her hair with the pin.

That night the Prince and Lamy were put to sleep in the same cell, and both slept very little. The Prince begged his companion to inform his father, and promised him the most magnificent rewards. "I was hunting with my suite," said he, "when these bandits fell upon us, and found means to separate me from my guards, who took to flight in their terror, so I was brought

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here to be kept prisoner until my ransom is paid, but I shall die first! Can I ever get used to doing without my valets and my gentlemen? How can I manage to dress and undress myself, and arrange my hair! . . . . and then this odious little gipsy who ventures to give me orders! and that villainous sorceress who frightens me! Go, my friend, try to get out of this place, you will find my horse ready saddled; they've fastened him to a tree near the entrance of the subterranean passage. His name is Sirocco, and he answers to it. As soon as your foot is in the stirrup, throw the bridle on his neck, and he will go as straight as an arrow to my father's palace. If you succeed, your fortune is made, and the gratitude of the King will have no limits." Lamy promised to reflect upon the enterprise; he felt full of courage to attempt it, but this was not to be done without first getting out of the subterranean habitation. The idea struck him that, by the help of the mirror, he might perhaps discover the secret of the opening, and the next day, whilst the Prince was still in bed, he sat

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down before the fire, and amused himself by turning the mirror, so that it reflected the flames into different parts of the cave. This play immediately captivated the attention of Hadjina, as Lamy had hoped, and she took possession of the mirror to make use of it at her turn.

"Hadjina," said Lamy, with a voice that slightly trembled with emotion, "have you a key to open the subterranean way?"

"I have no need of a key," she answered, still turning the Mirror of Truth, "I push the copper hinge that projects a little, and the trap-door opens of itself."

In the course of the day, the chief of the robbers came to inform his daughter that he would be away during that night, and a portion of the succeeding day. This piece of information was not lost upon Lamy, who formed the project of flight during the absence of the brigands. He had calculated that this would be easier for him during the captivity of the Prince, since a separate cave had been given to serve as a bed-chamber for both of them, and in this way

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they were free from Hadjina's nocturnal *surveillance.*

As soon as the little gipsy had gone to rest, Lamy communicated his plan to his companion, and earnestly entreated him to profit by a chance so favourable; but the Prince Hercules Achilles Hector had no taste for adventures; he feared not to be able to get out of the subterranean way, and that he might be surprised in the midst of his attempt; he feared to be pursued, and caught by the brigands, perhaps even killed; and then he was doubtful whether he could support the fatigue of a precipitate flight. All things considered, he preferred to wait quietly for the liberators whom his father would be sure to send after him, when Lamy had told his story; so he gave Lamy, as evidence of his mission, a gold ring, on which his armorial bearings were engraved. Everything being perfectly settled between the two companions, one of them went to bed again, and the other ventured barefoot, with infinite precaution, into the subterranean passage, scarcely daring to breathe, and guiding himself by the side-wall, along which he passed

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his hand as he advanced. An obstacle presented itself, and stopped the way; he thought that it must be the stone, and felt the surface of it carefully. Something projected, he pressed upon it; and immediately the trap-door rose, and he saw through the opening the clear bright stars of heaven! He slipped through, and looked cautiously around to make sure that there were no guards. He saw nothing at all; but, gliding between the trees, he very soon heard the neighing of a horse. He directed his steps that way, and soon perceived a pony fastened by a cord to a stake, and eating grass, but stopping from time to time to see who was coming. "Sirocco!" Lamy said, with a low voice. The pony raised its head, and listened. "Sirocco!" he repeated, and the animal neighed with joy, and pulled his cord in the direction that the voice came from. The saddle and bridle had been removed, but the young villager rode very well bare-back, and coud be satisfied with a halter for a horse; from his infancy he had gone to fetch horses from the fields, and had taken them to the river, so that he had become

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a bold rider very early in life. Taking a run, he jumped on Sirocco, and cut the tether, after which Sirocco set off like an arrow.

The ride was not without danger, for the branches often switched in his face, and as Sirocco shied very often, and was not kept in order by a bit, Lamy might have been thrown very easily, but he managed to stick on; and when the day dawned, Sirocco brought him to a town that seemed superb to his eyes, unaccustomed to such splendour. Sirocco flew like a whirlwind amidst the astonished inhabitants, and did not stop till he reached the door of a magnificent palace.

The guards were very much astonished when they saw a little country youth arriving like that, on the Prince's own pony, a bare-foot lad, who asked to see the King immediately, and sent him his son's ring. However, as his Majesty gave orders that he should be introduced into the presence, there was no time to ask him any questions.

Lamy informed the King how his son had been taken prisoner by the brigands, and offered

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to guide the soldiers that should be sent to deliver him. The King then informed Lamy that the brigands had demanded such an exorbitant ransom that he had not been able to get so much treasure together, and began to fear lest he might not be able to save him. He overwhelmed the young villager with proofs of his gratitude, and wished to make him sit down to a magnificent repast, clad in gorgeous apparel, but Lamy represented to him that it was necessary to act without delay, and surprise the brigands before they became aware of his escape. He ate hastily, and set off immediately at the head of a hundred of the best soldiers in the kingdom. "Sire," he said, respectfully, in taking leave of the King, who accompanied him as far as the great court-yard of the palace, where the soldiers were waiting, "if some misfortune happen to me in the combat, I beg your Majesty not to punish the little Hadjina, when she is taken captive with the brigands; she has been as good to me as her nature permitted, and she is innocent of her father's crimes."

"I can refuse nothing to him who has saved

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my son," replied the King; "the little gipsy shall be kindly treated out of consideration for you: but you will come back yourself, I hope, to enjoy the recompense that I reserve for you."

Lamy set off at a gallop, followed by the soldiers, and his first care was to make sure whether the robbers had come back. Seeing no one, he had time to post his soldiers so as to surround the robbers on their return from their expedition. He had but barely time to finish his preparations, when the brigands came back, laden with booty; the soldiers waited till they had laid down their arms, then suddenly fell upon them and put them in fetters. Being thus completely taken by surprise, their resistance was very short, and only three of the soldiers received wounds of any consequence. Whilst these soldiers were being cared for, Lamy went to the subterranean passage, pressed upon the trap-door, as he had seen Hadjina do, and went to inform the Prince that he was free. At this news the Prince showed great joy, and wished to set off immediately; but Hadjina and the old woman cried so loudly, and made such resistance,

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when they had to be removed, that they caused considerable delay. However, the party ended by getting into marching order, the soldiers in two lines, to guard the prisoners, who walked in the middle, chained two by two. Hadjina would not quit her father's hand.

The march was very slow, for they were obliged to let the prisoners rest from time to time. Lamy had frequently offered to take Hadjina on his horse, but she would neither look at him nor answer him; however, towards midnight, she was so completely worn out that her father was obliged to take her on his shoulders, not being able to bear her in his arms, which were chained; but he himself began to show signs of exhaustion, in spite of all his efforts, and Lamy said to the Prince that he was going to renew his endeavours to persuade Hadjina to separate from her father. "The separation *must* come at last," he said, "when he will have to go to prison, and it would be less painful now than it will then."

"No!" answered the Prince, "she will not leave him in prison nor on the gibbet; they will

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share the same fate; I shall take good care of that. She is a proud little thing, who has behaved disrespectfully to me. I will make her repent."

Lamy explained that he had begged Hadjina's pardon from the King, and that it had been granted.

"Very well, it shall be withdrawn again, that's all!" replied the Prince sharply; "and indeed, Lamy, we must remember now that our relative positions are completely changed, and that I have a right to expect from you, as from every one, all the respect and deference due to my rank, and to my illustrious birth. Know, then, to begin with, that my desires are laws!"

The young villager was confounded. Could this be the gratitude which had been promised to him? As the Prince continued to humiliate him in all that was said or done, from that moment he began to feel rather disquieted as to the treatment that awaited him on his arrival. He very much wished to know the real intentions of the Prince with regard to him; but how ascertain them? He thought, indeed, of his

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mirror, but under what pretext could he ever put it into the Prince's hands? All at once an idea struck him. As the day was beginning to dawn he took the mirror from his pocket and seemed to look at himself attentively, whilst he separated and smoothed his hair as well as he could with his fingers. This, having lasted for some time, ended by attracting the attention of the Prince, who asked Lamy what he was doing.

"I'm just trying to make myself tidy before going into the town. We are all so disorderly that we might easily be taken for thieves; I am doing what I can to give myself a rather more decent appearance." Saying this, Lamy arranged his cravat and pulled down the collar of his shirt.

"Give me that looking-glass," said the Prince; "I'm rather apprehensive that my own dress may not be in proper order to go into the town."

Lamy did not wait to be asked twice, but held out to the Prince the *Mirror of Truth.* "What a queer looking-glass!" he immediately

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exclaimed. "It does not flatter, at any rate. It cannot have cost much, it's full of defects that deform one's features."

Whilst the Prince arranged his hair, Lamy hastened to inquire what were his intentions with respect to himself as soon as he got back to the Palace. The Prince Hercules Achilles Hector burst into loud laughter at this question. "What I shall do with *thee?* Presumptuous little fool, that which you are scarcely expecting. You want to pass for my preserver, and to shine at my expense. . . . I shall tell my father that you belong to the band of brigands, and that all this affair has been concerted between you and the chief to get a rich reward. I shall give as a proof your request in favour of Hadjina, and say that it was to have been followed by a similar one on behalf of her father. You will be punished, and I shall get rid of a tell-tale and a tiresome liberator; it is very disagreeable and very ridiculous to have been saved."

"So this is gratitude!" thought Lamy, quite disappointed. All he now had in view was to

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shelter himself as soon as possible from the jealousy that he had involuntarily inspired; and so soon as he had recovered the mirror, whose value he now accurately appreciated, he watched his opportunity, and rode at full speed in the opposite direction to that which the Prince was following. After having put a considerable distance between himself and his late companion in misfortune, Lamy slackened speed whilst still continuing his journey, quite decided not to stop before he had reached a place of importance. The first rays of the dawn presented to his eyes, on the second day, a perfectly novel spectacle: it was the sea, which he had never beheld. He remained for a long time plunged in wonder, and was only roused by the arrival of a carriage which stopped upon the sand. Three women got down from the carriage, or rather, two women and a girl, amongst whom it was easy to distinguish the mother, the daughter, and a waiting-maid. "Are you not afraid that the season may be too advanced to go on with your baths, Fanny?" asked the eldest of the three persons.

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"Oh, no, mamma! I am so used to the water that it does not seem cold to me; besides, I feel so well after my bath, each time I regain a little strength," and as she spoke, Fanny took off a long mantle which wrapped her from head to foot, and appeared in a bathing costume.

"Well, don't stay long in then, and especially don't go to any distance," the mother recommended, and sat down upon a light stool that her maid had brought.

Lamy amused himself by watching the pretty swimmer, who, without paying attention to the maternal recommendations, went away from the shore with equal and regular strokes. A cool breeze rose from the shore, and rippled the surface of the water; it soon raised little waves, and the boy thought that the labour of swimming back would be rather severe; no doubt this was also the lady's own reflection, for she made a speaking trumpet of her hands, and called out as loudly as she could, "Fanny! Fanny! come back quickly, the wind is rising!" The bather came back obediently, but in spite of her repeated strokes, which were

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now stronger than ever, she did not seem to get any nearer to the shore. A feeling of anxiety made the mother come to Lamy, and say to him, "The wind is not strong, is it? . . . Yet it is against my daughter, and I am rather afraid of the fatigue that it may cause her—and still she swims very well, and has sometimes gone very far. . . . . There is no danger, I hope; do you think there is?—Can you swim?"

Lamy answered that he had never tried in the sea, but that it had often happened to him to pass a long time in swimming in rivers or ponds.

"She is gaining ground! . . . decidedly she is nearer, you see," continued the lady; "happily, for the wind is increasing, and the waves are bigger."

Lamy did not venture to say anything, but he thought he observed that the strength of the bather was rapidly exhausting itself, and that she was still a long way from the shore; her movements had become unequal and jerky, and at length he saw her float on the back to

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take breath; after this he did not lose sight of her, and soon perceived that she was now rapidly losing what little distance had been won by her previous efforts.

"She is going farther from us!" exclaimed the mother. "John, go and get a boat, and fetch her in immediately." But no boat was visible in the place, and to all orders and supplications John answered that he did not swim well enough to venture to attempt a rescue. In vain the poor mother, in her despair, offered him her fortune to save her daughter, and wrung her hands in this frightful agony; John sadly bowed his head, murmuring that it was useless. At last a cry from the deep pierced the air. "Help!" cried a far-off voice with the energy of despair; then came appeals successively weaker and weaker, more and more remote; and both the lady and her maid went on their knees before the coachman, imploring him to save the young lady.

The painful cries having now ceased, the mother dreaded to see her child swallowed up in the abyss, when she thought she perceived a

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man going swiftly towards her daughter. He cut the water on his side, using the swiftest of all the kinds of swimming, but at the same time the most fatiguing. She looked round about her, and no longer seeing Lamy, understood that he was trying to save her child at the peril of his life. With eyes bathed in tears, she was scarcely able to follow him, and an eager prayer rose from her heart to heaven for the safety of the two creatures now in peril.

The rescue was long and difficult. Lamy pushed before him the body of the young lady, in a state of unconsciousness, and as soon as his task was completed he himself fell down exhausted on the shore. Of the care that was taken of him, the protestations of gratitude that were addressed to him, he heard nothing for several days; but on recovering from the torpor which was the consequence of his immense effort, he found himself installed in an excellent bed, surrounded by everything which is an evidence of wealth and luxury, and nursed by Fanny, who was still very pale, and by her mother. These ladies showed themselves so

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glad of his return to health that he was moved by it, and they treated him so affectionately that he had no other alternative but to conform himself to all their decisions. From that time he became as a member of the family.

What a happy change in his life! Only a few weeks separated him from the time when he had been at the mercy of a despotic little girl, and of a brigand chief; and now he was treated like the son of wealthy parents, petted, and flattered. Fanny had never done with her praises of his courage, his presence of mind, his intelligence; and she introduced him to all her friends, who naturally congratulated the brave rescuer. Lamy soon allowed himself to be intoxicated by the pleasures of his new existence, and after having postponed his return to Cladie, he finished by thinking no more about it. At first he spent the whole of his days with the mother and daughter, going out with them, and accompanying them everywhere; but he was soon obliged to take to other habits, as lessons and studies required a considerable time, especially for him, who had no more learn-

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ing than a young herdsman usually possesses. He was, therefore, obliged to give up his pleasant drives with these ladies, and work at dry exercises when they went to evening parties.

These sacrifices were supported with considerable courage just at first; for Lamy felt that, as a great fortune and a good position had been promised him, he ought to make himself worthy of them; but it is hard for any one to remain shut up, spelling out books that he doesn't understand, when all his life he has enjoyed the open air without restraint, the liberty of the fields, and a healthy activity. In course of time all these things become matters of necessity, so that the privation of them is a cause of genuine suffering. Lamy, however, bore it during a whole year, but when he thought how little progress he had made he began to feel discouraged. It seemed to him also that the affection which had been shown him was cooling, and he confessed to himself frankly that he was no longer happy. He was, it is true, well clothed and waited upon, the little money-box in his writing-desk was always

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full of gold, however much he spent; but, in his intercourse with those who surrounded him, he observed a want of consideration which caused him the bitterest suffering. Fanny remained for weeks together without seeing him, and exhibited no regret, and Fanny's mother found pretexts for no longer taking him with her, or for getting him out of the way when she received company. "What can be the reason?" he asked himself with grief, "and what have I done to them?" He thought that the best way would be to put the question frankly to them, and he did so; but the ladies answered (with visible embarrassment) that he was mistaken, that nothing was changed; and, as he persisted, they almost accused him of ingratitude. "What did he want more, if he were not satisfied?" He resolved, nevertheless, to set his heart at rest, and one evening when Fanny, ready to go to the ball, waited for her mother in the drawing-room, Lamy, who had just paid her a compliment on her toilet, insinuated that some criticisms might be suggested as to her head-dress. "This sprig of flowers is ungraceful, and

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heavy behind," he said; and, as she wanted to see it in order to arrange it, he placed the young lady with her back to a great pier-glass, and politely handed her the *Mirror of Truth*, which was to show the back of the head-dress by a double reflection to the young lady who wore it.

"Fanny," he said to her immediately, "why do you always keep me at a distance now, and why may I no longer go with you? Have I displeased you in some way?"

"Not at all," she answered as she arranged her wreath; "but you must understand, my poor Lamy, that not being of our class in society, you are ridiculous in it; you have neither its manners, nor its habits, nor its tone. It is an impossibility for you to pay a compliment, to put on a glove as a gentleman would, to enter a room properly, or to take your leave. In our privacy at home, mamma and I pass over these deficiencies on account of the service that you rendered us, and it is in great part to spare you the sarcasms of our acquaintances that we leave you behind so often."

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"Then it is from duty that you bear with my bad manners?" asked Lamy, bitterly.

"It is rather awkwardness, and a want of *savoir-vivre*," replied the young lady, "but gratitude makes it a duty for us not to show ourselves too sensitive on these points, and in privacy this is possible enough. In society it is different, one is responsible for one's friends, and people have often said to me, 'This is the young man who saved you? It is very well to be grateful to him, but why should your mamma consider herself obliged to live in his society? In such cases one gives a sufficient reward, and so gets rid of the obligation;' but," Fanny hastened to add, "mamma and I do not think so, and when you have had education enough to choose a profession, she will supply the means necessary, and you will make a good marriage. Thank you!" she said, returning the mirror to him; "it is prettier now, is it not? I have taken out the flower."

Lamy thought that his heart was going to break, but he restrained his tears until after the departure of the two ladies. So he was not

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really loved at all! They kept him from a sense of duty, whilst blushing for his bad manners! His decision was come to in an instant, he was too proud to bear such a position. He wrote to thank the ladies for their goodness, assured them that he would never forget it, and, without a word that could betray the bitterness of his heart, he quitted a house where he had been received at first with affection, then tolerated, and where he doubted not that his flight would be felt as a relief.

In going away, he said to himself that fortune does not make happiness, and that he had not been really happy, notwithstanding all the luxury that surrounded him. "To be happy," he said to himself, "a man needs the respect of others, and honours, or fame," and he dreamed of some means by which he might be able to attain it. Now and then his heart saddened at the idea of being alone upon the earth, and an imperious desire to see Cladie again, the friend of his childhood, took possession of him, but a false shame prevented him from carrying this wish to its realization. "I

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have abandoned her for too long a time," he thought, "she does not love me any more, and has forgotten me;" and as he was ashamed of his conduct towards her, he thought of becoming a sailor, to go so far away that she might never meet him, and at the same time to escape from the search that might probably be made after him.

He took the loneliest roads, and one day, as he was continuing his journey in solitude, he stopped in astonishment, believing that he heard the roar of cannon. "*Boom, boom!*"—he was not mistaken, the same noise returned almost at regular intervals; what could be the cause of it? He wondered if he would not act wisely to choose another direction, and stopped to make sure from which side the sound came. Just then he perceived soldiers dressed in foreign uniforms coming rapidly to meet him; he did not venture to stir, fearing that he might be suspected of trying to escape. The soldiers spoke to him in a language that he did not understand; however, they made it clear to him that he was compelled to follow them. Lamy

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resigned himself, not being able to do otherwise, and followed them without resistance, but not without observing that he approached a fortified camp, from which a besieging army attacked a neighbouring city, the spires and towers of which were visible on a rising ground. As no one could understand him, he was taken to the general to be questioned by him. "Where do you come from?" asked the hostile general, with a foreign accent so strong that it would have made Lamy laugh under any other circumstances. "Where are you going? who are you? and what is your business?" Lamy told the truth, but the general did not believe him. "If you will not tell me why you are travelling here, it must be because you have something to conceal. You are no doubt a spy charged with despatches from the besieged city, and in that case your business may be considered settled, for you shall be shot forthwith!" Then he gave orders to search the supposed spy to find his despatches; but nothing suspicious was discovered except the mirror, which, nevertheless, appeared to interest the general extremely.

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"There's something beneath this," he said, and, having expressed a wish to be left alone with Lamy, he went on with his interrogatories whilst he examined the *Mirror of Truth*, which he kept turning about in his hands as if to discover some hidden meaning in it. This circumstance immediately suggested to Lamy the strange idea of changing parts with the general, and becoming questioner in his turn, so as to compel him to divulge his plans.

"This mirror," began the general, "is used for flashing signals, I am certain of it. If you don't answer honestly, look out for yourself!"

"You must be very anxious," replied Lamy, "since you arrest an innocent man, who is quite ignorant of what is going forward."

"Circumstances are serious!" the general answered, being compelled by the mirror to tell the truth, yet not perceiving that it compelled him; "our lines are weakened by epidemic diseases, and if, unfortunately for us, the besieged came to be aware that an army of relief is near, and that they might combine their action with that of the relieving general,

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we should be lost!—so answer me at once, what do you know of that army?"

"Nothing, but you seem to be afraid of it."

"According to my information, it is considerable enough to give me much anxiety; but how were you to employ this mirror for correspondence? was it with the besieged city? . . it is probable enough, from the direction you were taking, or was it a plan for getting to the relieving army after examining ours, and so giving them details about our forces and positions?"

"The mirror was only of use to dress myself. It is a present. As to the besieged town, I don't know it at all, and never was there; but from what direction is the relieving army coming that you suspect me of wishing to go that way?"

"It is advancing by the left bank of the river," replied the general, "where we are going in force to stop its passage; but," he went on in a severe tone, "as I can get nothing out of you, you shall remain a prisoner till further orders." Then he threw the mirror down on the table and quitted the tent.

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When Lamy was left to himself, he understood all the importance of the information that he now possessed. If he could only escape, and get inside that unhappy city, he was sure to be able to save it! This thought awakened both heroism and enthusiasm in his breast. The more he thought of the inhabitants, the more he pitied them; surrounded by enemies, suffering from privations, and without news of the help which was approaching, they would certainly let slip this one chance of deliverance. "No! that should never be!" and Lamy devised a plan which, if it required much audacity to carry it out, presented at least a fair chance of success. He took possession of a safe-conduct left blank, and, listening to the lightest noise with an attentive ear, so as not to be taken by surprise, he copied the general's own signature at the bottom. He had plenty of examples within reach, on orders placed upon the table to be distributed in the evening. Then he went straight to the guards at the entrance of the tent, and boldly presented his safe-conduct, but not without con-

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siderable inward anxiety and a violent beating of the heart. The soldiers supposed that their general had just signed the paper and given liberty to the prisoner, so they made no difficulty about letting him pass. It was as much as he could do to keep from running at full speed, but reflection overcame instinct, and understanding that this would rouse suspicions, he assumed as calm an air as he could. Once out of sight of the soldiers, he made up for lost time as fast as he could, bounding like a deer over all obstacles. He did not stop till he reached the outposts, where he immediately presented his safe-conduct with a degree of assurance that increased with success.

He had crossed the enemy's lines at early dawn, and without thinking of hunger, which he felt cruelly, without paying attention to his extreme fatigue, he kept on his way as if he had had wings, and thinking only of those whom he was about to deliver.

At length he reached the sentinels who guarded the city, told them that he had im-

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portant news for the Governor, and asked to be immediately taken into his presence. He had hardly finished his extraordinary recital, in which he concealed nothing but his manner of obtaining such important information, when the Governor pressed his hand in token of esteem and gratitude, and begged him to accompany his army to meet the relieving force. "Let us set out immediately," he said, "and catch the enemy between two fires."

All went on just as Lamy had hoped; the foreign army, which endeavoured to bar the passage against the relieving force, was unable to resist the unforeseen attack of the besieged, and was cut to pieces.

On his return to the city, Lamy was carried in triumph by a population intoxicated with joy and gratitude, which attributed its deliverance to him alone, and demanded a recompense for him in proportion to the great service he had rendered. During several days it was a continual ovation, and Lamy began to consider himself a great personage. The authorities of the town and the military leaders

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consulted together to decide what honours should be conferred upon him, and overwhelmed him with expressions of admiration. Nevertheless, it seemed to him that he could discern on some faces disguised jealousies and disappointed ambitions, or concealed sarcasms in their words of praise. His good sense suggested to him the desire to know exactly what to think of the opinion which they held concerning him, so to make sure of it he had recourse to his precious mirror, which he laid on the green cloth of the council-table, not doubting that its unaccustomed presence would call forth many commentaries, and that it would pass through many hands. This done, he hid himself behind the thick curtains and waited. The delegates of the citizens, the notables, and the officers sat round the table, and the Governor opened the sitting by a discourse in which he confessed himself greatly embarrassed about recommending a recompense which might be suitable to the saviour of the city. Having found the *Mirror of Truth* within reach of his hand, he took it up, and played with it as he

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might have done with a paper-cutter, without suspecting that in so doing he compelled himself to lay bare his most secret thoughts, after which he expressed himself as follows :—" We cannot offer a military recompense to this young man, for that is due to military valour only, of which he has displayed nothing. He would be out of his sphere in a high position, for which he has not been prepared by his education; really, it is most embarrassing." Having finished his speech in these terms, the Governor made an observation to his next neighbour about the presence of the mirror on the council-table ; then every one present wished to see it, and as it passed from hand to hand, compelling every one to tell the truth, remarks about Lamy were successively uttered with much sincerity. " He is very ignorant," said one ; " he does not know the usages of society ; he has nothing in his favour but his courage." " Not even that," replied another, " it is a mere chance which made him acquainted with the situation; there is nothing in it but a certain readiness and promptitude." " Oh ! as to that,

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anybody would have done as much with a pair of good legs; it's nothing but a question of muscle, but the populace have taken such a fancy to him." "If we were to vote him a sum of money," proposed an officer, "it is probably what he most desires, and what has decided him to run the risks of the adventure; he could do what he pleased with it, the people would be satisfied, and we should be rid of him." This proposition had a great success, but Lamy was sobered by what he had heard, and with a heart swelling with bitterness came from behind his curtain. He advanced with a firm step to the middle of the room, and said briefly, "You are mistaken, gentlemen, in supposing that I did this for money, I did it without forethought and risked my life. I want nothing." He then took up the little glass and quitted the assembly, leaving its members in a state of consternation.

And now he felt a deadly sadness come over him, and said to himself that there was nothing good or desirable on the earth, and that all the fruits of life had turned to ashes upon his lips,

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for neither fame nor wealth had given him happiness, and he wept bitterly. At length he determined to go back to his life of labour, and to the habits of his earliest youth; no longer hoping for happiness, he determined to seek at least the peace of a quiet life, and he set out to seek some farm where he might settle down for the rest of his days. For a long time he travelled without finding anything that attracted him, but one fine summer's day he stopped before a neat and tidy garden, at the foot of which meandered a little stream. The house, which was white, and covered with vines, had a cheerful and hospitable aspect, the well-cultivated fields that surrounded it produced an abundant crop. He entered, a cry of joy received him, and Cladie threw her arms about his neck. He was a little while in recognizing her, so much had she gained in beauty, but *she* did not hesitate for an instant. However, she soon restrained herself when she perceived how coldly her warm welcome was received. The poison of doubt had entered into Lamy's heart, and he no longer believed in any pure and disin-

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terested sentiment. He fancied that Cladie believed him to be rich, and her expressions of friendship gave him no pleasure. He learned that an old lady, whom his friend had nursed in her last illness, had bequeathed to her this pretty estate, which she kept in her own hands. He asked if she was married, and she answered "No," blushing like a strawberry. Then he concluded that she very soon would be, as she betrayed so much emotion, but he asked no further questions. When he had told her a part of his adventures, she asked him if he had brought back no curiosity from his travels. "I have nothing but a little looking-glass that I have kept for you all along—here it is!"

"You thought of me, then?" she asked with a voice full of emotion, as she took the *Mirror of Truth.* "Well, as for me, I have never passed one day without praying for you and regretting you, but I knew you would come back again!" and she wept sweet tears as she looked at him. Then Lamy pressed her to his heart as in former days, for his trust in her had

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returned. "Why are you so sad?" she asked him again.

"I was sad," he answered, "because I had acquired a disgust for life, having been successively attracted by things that promised happiness vainly, and afterwards cruelly undeceived; but at length I have made sure that there is one enduring power which survives absence, despises self-interest, and overcomes both ambition and adversity—and that is, a true affection. I know the value of it, thanks to the *Mirror of Truth.* It gives the only true happiness in life, which is to be found neither in reputation nor in luxury, and it is worth more by itself than all other gifts together."

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THE UNKNOWN TREE.

THERE lived in old time a certain rich Earl, who had a passion for flowers, and trees, and gardens. All his pride was to possess new kinds of plants, and the rarest and finest fruits; and he gave such high wages to the men who took care of them, that the most celebrated gardeners in the world came to work for him.

One day, as he was walking in his orchard, he noticed with vexation and anger a miserable little tree, thin and weak, with dry sprigs, and leaves that were already yellowing, although but just opened. The eye was immediately drawn to this wretched plant from the contrast with its vigorous neighbours, so full of sap and health.

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The Earl immediately called for his gardener and reproached him with his negligence in reference to this tree, in rather sharp language. "Why have you not long since rooted it up, and planted another in its place?" The gardener excused himself on the pretext that, as he did not know the species, he had been afraid of sacrificing something valuable. But his master answered that the tree had been planted three years, and had never shown any intention of growing, that it spoiled the look of his plantation and could no longer be tolerated where it stood. The Earl gave orders that it should be torn up immediately, and thrown over the hedge to be burned. "It must be replaced by a young tree already strong enough to look well amongst the rest, so as not to spoil their uniformity. Have you any idea what species it belonged to?"

"I have never been able to find that out during all the time that it remained in the orchard," replied the gardener, "so I used to call it 'The Unknown Tree.'"

"It's no great loss, at all events," observed

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the Earl, who thought no more about the matter.

On the evening of the same day, little Peter came back from school with his school-fellows, and hastened to get home to water his flowers, which must have been very thirsty, for this first spring day had been extremely hot.

Let us explain that little Peter lived quite close to the Earl, and that his relations occupied one of the Earl's farms, from which Peter often admired his beautiful garden. He knew the gardeners too, and, with the spirit of imitation that exists in all children, had made for himself a little bit of a garden that he cultivated remarkably well, and of which he was certainly quite as proud as the Earl could possibly be of his. There was, however, this difference, that as the Earl was rich he could buy whatever he chose, whereas little Peter had to ransack the hedges and woods for the flowers that he afterwards transplanted into his tiny garden. It happened occasionally,

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however, that the gardener made him a present of some plants, that were either superfluous or deemed unworthy to appear in the beds round the Earl's palace, or even some seeds of doubtful genealogy, and these rejected things had become little Peter's pride and joy. Nevertheless, his great ambition had up to this time remained unsatisfied; and that was to possess *a tree*, not merely a little shrub, or a wild sapling, but a real garden-tree. Now it so happened that in passing along the road near the hedge he caught sight of the one that had been rooted up and thrown away; so that a great wish to obtain it immediately took possession of his mind. Trembling with fear of a refusal, he timidly ventured to make his request to the gardener, who answered, with a shrug of the shoulders, "Take it if you like, little Peter, but it's lost labour, for the tree will never grow." Far from being discouraged by this prediction, the boy carried off his prize with the greatest precaution, so that the branches might not trail along the ground, and he ran as fast as his burden would let him, till he got to his own

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garden, so anxious was he lest the giver should change his mind.

He immediately made a great hole, and put his tree into it with all imaginable care, and now he wondered anxiously if it would not grow. Every morning before he set out for school, and every evening as soon as he came back, little Peter ran to examine all the buds of his tree, one after another. O, happiness! hardly a fortnight had elapsed before tiny buds appeared all along the branches, they rapidly swelled, took colour, and then masses of flowers, with delicate and transparent petals, with rose-coloured pistils, and a strange sweet odour, covered all the branches. Never in all his life had little Peter been so happy or so proud; he invited his playmates to come and admire his tree, and even went so far as to beg the gardener to come and see it in order to give its name; but after due examination, the gardener had to confess that it was unknown to him. After that, little Peter imagined that "Unknown" was the name of the species, and when people asked him what it was called, he

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answered with decision, "the Unknown." If he had been charmed with the flowers, still more was he delighted when little green balls succeeded to them, swelled, and coloured themselves in the autumn with the most beautiful vermilion. Full of gratitude for the gift which he had received, little Peter resolved to offer the first-fruits of his tree to the nobleman from whose garden it came. So he cleverly wove together a little rush-basket, filled it with fresh moss that he had gathered in the woods, and upon this soft bed placed six of the finest fruits of his tree.

"What are you bringing me there, my lad?" said the Earl, as soon as he saw him.

Little Peter, without daring to answer, held out his rush-basket.

When he saw the fruit, the nobleman became interested, and wished to know what species of tree had produced them. "It is the Unknown Tree," Peter answered with assurance. The Earl felt his curiosity awakened, and asked so many questions that he ended by learning the history of the tree; and, being much pleased with the

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attention of his little tenant, he paid him the compliment of saying that he would become an excellent gardener when he grew older.

Delighted to have thus paid his debt of gratitude, the boy thought that he might now ascertain whether these fruits were as good as they were beautiful, and began to taste them. They were rather like peaches, yet were not peaches, and, marvel of marvels! each of them contained a superb ruby for a stone!

Little Peter was still overwhelmed with astonishment at this discovery, when the Earl came to his tiny garden, followed by several workmen, whom he ordered to pull up the tree, which he now claimed as his own property. At the same time he covered poor Peter with abuse, and reproached him with having stolen it. The poor child could do nothing but cry, without understanding the sudden rage and menaces of the Earl; and he regretted his tree as one regrets a friend. Henceforth he had no heart to cultivate his little garden, which was soon full of weeds, and just like any other part of the farm-yard. Often in the evening,

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when he knew that all the farm-people had gone to bed, he jumped over the hedge, and went to visit the Unknown Tree, whose leaves were turning yellow and dropping from the branches; and Peter came sadly back, believing that his friend was suffering.

When once the Earl had seen the rubies in the fruit, he had not strength of mind to master his cupidity, so by a wrongful action he had resumed possession of the Unknown Tree. But as soon as it had been put in the orchard the tree had dried up, its fruits had rotted, and no one had profited by them. Still the Earl did not doubt that it would be green again the following spring, and he took care of it, and watered it with his own hands, but it was all of no use.

When the spring came, no sign of vegetation was visible. The Earl watched it for hours together, exposed to the rays of the dangerous April sun, caught a fever, and died.

The first thing his heir did was to pull up the tree, as he saw that it did not grow, and knew nothing about the marvellous rubies in its

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fruit. This time, little Peter, grown prudent by experience, asked nothing of anybody, he went in the night to remove his friend and substitute a tree of the same size and appearance which he had been to cut in the forest.

The Unknown Tree was replaced in its former situation in Peter's little garden, and became superb. It grew up, its branches spread out and gave splendid harvests of ruby-stoned fruit.

One evening in the spring, when the air was soft, and mild, and the flowers of the tree filled it with their perfume, little Peter, who was studying his lesson under its shadow, fell asleep and dreamed. He was a great boy now, he was thirteen years old, and knew well enough that "Unknown" was not the name of his tree, so he said to it in his dream, "In payment for my care, Unknown Tree, tell me thy name. I have saved thee twice from death, and have cared for thee as well as I have been able. Tell me what thy name is, and why the Earl's fair garden seemed so dangerous and deadly a place for thee."

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And the tree answered:—

"My name is GENIUS. I can only grow and bring forth fruit in certain soils, and with certain surroundings. If I do not find in the earth and air the principles necessary to my development, I perish and die. The trees in the Earl's orchard smothered me, the dry soil gave me no support. Here I have room to spread my branches, and my roots penetrate into the earth in every direction. I am constantly drawing value to myself which I render back a hundredfold, and my fruits are for all. Yet am I incapable of propagating my own species, and He who made me put a precious stone in my fruit instead of seed, and He alone makes me grow wherever it pleases Him."

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GALIBI;

OR, THE TALKING MONKEY.

YOUNG Prince Galibi was so glad of the present which had just been given him, that he expressed his satisfaction with great energy, and very noisily, although as yet he was not able to speak. He clapped his two little hands together with all his might, cried aloud with admiration, and made a thousand gambols in imitation of the two little monkeys, which had just been brought to him. The King and Queen shed tears of tenderness on witnessing the innocent gaiety of an heir that

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they had hoped for during twenty-five years, and who had been given to them a year before.

The gentlemen and ladies of the court, who were permitted to come and respectfully contemplate the performances of the august Prince, shared the natural emotion of the Sovereign; and the Prime Minister in particular was so deeply touched, that his sentiments of loyal sympathy led him to propose a national reward in favour of him who, by his gift, had procured such a pleasure for the Prince. The proposition was unanimously accepted, and the giver of the monkeys learned a few hours later that he was appointed "Most Illustrious Cutter of Capers to Prince Galibi," an honorary title, not to be transmitted, to which no function was attached except that which consisted in pocketing six thousand gold piastres annually; a function which was accepted without the least objection by the "Illustrious Cutter of Capers to Prince Galibi."

The two monkeys were called Jocko and Jacka; and the little Prince soon took such a

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liking to them that he uttered horrible cries, and made the most frightful grimaces as soon as ever the monkeys were removed from his august presence.

The nurse meanwhile chattered without ceasing about the rapid development of her royal nurseling, and continually expressed the fear lest a child, "so clever for his age," might be too clever to live, an idea which filled the souls of the King and Queen with terror.

Although as yet but barely able to stand upon his little legs, Galibi already turned somersets very successfully in answer to the homage that the great folks of the kingdom came to offer to him; it was his most usual way of receiving them, except when he felt in the humour to repeat a lesson learned from Jacka, and which consisted in making a peculiarly frightful contortion, an action which those venerable grandees declared to be charmingly witty, smiling all the time with their lips and swallowing their mortification.

Galibi, it is true, had acquired these pretty accomplishments in a remarkably short time,

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and always wanted to make parade of them. He studied with the deepest attention all the movements of Jocko and Jacka, and eagerly endeavoured to copy them, in which he completely succeeded. If Jocko climbed up a pillar, Galibi was in an instant upon the astonished shoulders of his lord-in-waiting, overwhelmed by so great an honour; if Jacka, after having torn a cushion pulled out the hair by handfuls, the Prince with equal address made a clearing in the most respectable heads of hair, and stood firm with a perfect balance on the backs of his victims, in spite of their shakings and their writhings, for the pain made them anything but quiet. These exhibitions made everybody declare to the delighted King and Queen that never had Prince shown so much address, and vivacity, and wit.

When he came to be a little older, he wanted to have a dress in all respects like that of Jocko and Jacka. This was a mantle in the shape of a pelisse, all covered with gold, a pair of white tights, and a hat adorned with red feathers. There was no greater pleasure for him than to

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dress himself in this costume at the same time with his monkeys, and then to go and claim the honours due to his rank. This caused great perplexity at court, for the malicious Galibi sometimes amused himself by making Jocko or Jacka enter the throne-room in his stead in the middle of a ceremony, and he imitated the monkeys so perfectly, and the monkeys imitated him so well, that the deepest perspicacity was not always successful in distinguishing which was the Prince and which the monkey. Hence the most fearful complications in the government of the country—unexpected favours due to a trick that had been patiently put up with, and public disgraces which the people tried in vain to understand, and which may have been due to a "stop it, Jocko," addressed by mistake to the Prince himself. It is plain that it was impossible to tolerate in high office a wretch so oblivious of decorum as to say to his Prince, "Down, Jacka." If such a thing had been allowed to pass, there would have been an end of all government.

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The King and Queen, however, began to perceive that the permanent society of Jocko and Jacka might end by having a too decided influence on the habits and manners of the Prince, so they tried to bring about gradually a separation between him and the monkeys; but they had not counted upon the strength of resistance of which a child is capable when all his caprices have been yielded to ever since he was born. So soon as Galibi became aware that one of his monkeys was absent, he flew into the most frightful rages; he uttered piercing yells, he rolled on the ground, or bounded in an incredible way, he jumped on those who surrounded him to scratch them and bite them. His cries were answered by the cries of Jocko or Jacka, shut up in a neighbouring room; and then there was a deafening tumult; however, it was easy enough to put the monkeys in order with a good whipping; but what living being would have dared to administer any such correction to the Prince?

He, therefore, remained, for want of a little firmness, what he had been up to that time—

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the master; and continued to profit so well from the lessons his strange masters taught him, as to be inferior to them in no respect whatever, and with the malice of a monkey he could conceive and execute all manner of monkey tricks, to the despair of his august parents.

If the members of the court walked in the garden of the palace, an apple cleverly thrown at the Prime Minister's eye made him immediately shed a torrent of involuntary tears, and changed the symmetry of his features in a painful manner. If he looked up with his unhurt eye to the tree whence the stroke had come, and angrily menaced Jocko, Galibi would call out in mockery, "What! have I been so unfortunate as to accidentally hit you, Mr. Prime Minister?"

"Oh, not at all," the victim would hasten to answer, although his eye was now shut up by an enormous swelling, and surrounded by a circle of different colours, yellow, blue, and black. Then the Prince jumped from branch to branch, following the monkeys, and all three

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of them expressed their pleasure by deafening cries.

At other times he announced his intention of being present at the Council, and on these days the souls of the ministers were filled with an abject terror. Nobody ever likes to appear ridiculous, whether amongst ministers or other people; what then must have been their fears and anxieties, when they knew beforehand that such would be the inevitable fate of one or another of them. The only hope that remained to them was that this time their neighbours might be made more ridiculous than themselves.

It happened sometimes that just when the President of the Council, having put his enormous spectacles on his respectable nose, prepared to read his report, he remained silent, the page presenting to his gaze nothing but a uniform appearance of grey shade without any meaning. He would look at it several different times with no better success; till at length, struck by a sudden inspiration, he put his hand where the spectacles should be,

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which alas! instead of improving his sight, were now doing just the contrary for that of the Prince, gravely seated at the opposite side of the table.

Then came the Secretary's turn. He coughed and sneezed from a sudden cold in a manner which quite disturbed the peace of the other councillors, who, looking at him in their vexation, soon perceived that his wig was gone, and had become the most remarkable ornament of Jacka.

All these tricks were considered inoffensive, and tolerated at the court as in a family circle, but they were now about to bring forth other fruits, for Galibi, proud of his success, became bolder from day to day; and, finding no longer any pleasure in mystifying his ordinary victims, aspired to exhibit his talents before a new public;—the opportunity only presented itself too soon.

The puissant monarch, Trichombo, desiring to enter into relations of commerce and friendship with Rodzouto, the father of Galibi, sent him a magnificent embassy, composed of fourteen of

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the greatest lords of his court. The day of their reception having arrived, the King, surrounded by his dignitaries, gave orders for the introduction of the ambassadors, who, without exception, superbly dressed and bearers of presents which they were to offer to Rodzouto, approached his Majesty on all fours, according to the ancient etiquette of their country, that is to say, upon their hands and knees. Thus, therefore, they advanced with a majestic slowness one after another.

To leap on the back of the First Ambassador who so presented himself, and compel him by squeezing him with the knees, and vigorous spurring with the heels, to run round the room, like a frightened animal, was the work of a moment for Galibi. Jocko and Jacka imitated him with the speed of lightning, and did just the same to the Second and Third Ambassadors. The King was thrown into consternation just at first, and ready to pull his hair out by the roots; but he thought of a clever expedient, and made an imperative gesture to all his nobles, who threw themselves at once upon

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the backs of the remaining members of the Embassy. It is needless to explain how greatly all the envoys were surprised by a treatment so unusual; however, they supposed it to be a part of the programme, but thought it most fatiguing, and hoped that the ceremony might not be unnecessarily protracted. The riders, ashamed and beside themselves, did not venture to exchange so much as a glance whilst they caracoled after their Prince; the human steeds, exhausted and covered with perspiration, positively began to succumb beneath these excessive honours, and an amount of exercise for which their habits had certainly not prepared them, when Galibi with a very clever antic left his victim at liberty and immediately vanished, followed by his monkeys, and leaving the court to get out of the difficulty as they best could. Happily the King's plan was formed: out of breath, he regained his throne, and explained to the ambassadors in rather vague and broken language that he had desired to show them a special favour on this memorable occasion, a favour, the rarity of

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which ought sufficiently to prove its high significance and value.

The ambassadors from Trichombo, surprised but not convinced, hesitated in their doubts between an exceptional honour and an unworthy humiliation, and retired without conforming themselves to the etiquette of their country. They immediately hunted up a code of court ceremonial, and conscientiously studied it, at the same time sending a messenger to their own sovereign relatively to their future conduct. Everything depended upon the point of view, and upon precedent. Had there been an intention of casting ridicule upon them, in making them trot about the room like little wooden horses, or ought the honour of having a King or a Prince on one's back to be considered so ennobling that they might be proud of it? All depended upon that. One thing, however, was unanimously agreed upon by the ambassadors, namely, that if there were no precedent they must firmly refuse to admit this practice for the future; the trade of ambassador would become too painful at such a cost, for

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they felt all stiff and out of joint with the operation.

In spite of the heroism and presence of mind which had been incontestably exhibited by the King and his ministers, in this critical and unforeseen circumstance, Trichombo considered himself insulted in the person of his ambassadors, and declared war against Rodzouto. Such was the result of Galibi's equestrian caprice.

Shortly after this unhappy incident, the most extraordinary events took place in the kingdom. The King, intending to review his troops, quitted his palace in a general's full uniform; and, being followed by an enormous crowd, rode towards the field of military evolutions. As soon as he was visible, the officers cried, "Present arms!" and the King advanced in the middle of a hedge of soldiers, whose newly invented arms glittered brilliantly in the sunshine. Nevertheless the warriors remained sad and humbled under their parade uniforms, not a single "hurrah!" came from their lips, and the King himself, when he lifted

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his plumed hat to salute the troops, let it drop from his paralyzed hand, and was not entirely able to check a cry of horror! . . . . he believed himself mad; for there, before his eyes, each of his soldiers seemed to present to him . . . . . a *squirt!!!* What a frightful hallucination! to the right, to the left, before and behind him shone the squirts most carefully polished; they surrounded him; they blinded him with their glitter and menaced him with their water-jets. An inexpressible anguish pierced the heart of the monarch. "Could the squirts be charged?" . . . All his doubts were removed in an instant; hardly had the very unsuitable word "Fire!" escaped from the lips of Prince Galibi, than the crowd fled in affright, but not without having received a complete discharge. Then arose an inextinguishable clamour and laughter, and pushings, and hustlings, and finally a general *sauve-qui-peut.* The crowd had been amused and did not take the thing seriously; but Rodzouto was very much put out, and went back to his palace hanging down his head. Soon after his arrival, there

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burst a violent tempest. The officers were sent for in the utmost haste to give an account of their infamous conduct to the King, and his Majesty, who did not administer justice in a round-about way, decided that they should all immediately have their heads cut off! On their part, these brave soldiers had been filled with humiliation and bitterness, when they had found themselves obliged to play such a ridiculous and degrading part. They had been on the point of revolting against the orders that had come from the war office, yet, being always accustomed to consider passive obedience as the first of duties, they had finally accepted them with resignation. They now brought, along with their resignation, the hateful order containing directions for the review and for the new arm to be used by his Majesty's troops.

On seeing this order, the King thought he had gone wrong in his head; it was, indeed, an authentic and genuine order, sealed with the royal seal!

Nobody could make anything out of it, but every one suspected that Galibi must have a

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hand in it. Instead of decapitating the officers, the King decorated them with the order of the Green Camel in emeralds, and they were charged to explain to their troops in an order of the day that there was a hitherto inexplicable mystery at the bottom of this strange business, very probably a plot, concerning which an inquest would shortly be opened. The King promised on his royal word that so soon as the criminals could be discovered they should be punished in an exemplary manner. Whilst these things were going on, Galibi laughed, jumped, and danced with his monkeys, and followed the officers to the door, putting his thumb to his nose behind their backs; to the great scandal of the courtiers, who feared a similar treatment so soon as their backs were turned towards the Prince.

But the miseries of the King were renewed and multiplied every day. One morning, as he went to the bath, he was extremely surprised to observe for the first time that the majority of his subjects went about their business with bare

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and shaven heads. He was going to inquire if it were a new fashion, when he saw placarded upon the walls immense advertisements composed as follows:—

BY ROYAL COMMAND.

To all our loyal and well-beloved subjects, these presents.

WHEREAS it hath come even unto our august ears that a great number of our said subjects, being married, do nevertheless spend half their time in coffee-shops,

Being desirous to put an end to a state of things so prejudicial to public and general morality:

We, RODZOUTO, of our royal will and authority do issue our irresistible commands,

That every married man shall have his head shaven by his wife, on the night following the publication of this decree, if he has been to a coffee-shop during the day.

And KNOW YE that whosoever shall take upon himself to disobey our royal ordinance, shall be seized and incarcerated during our

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good pleasure, that is to say, every one of our subjects who, being a married man, and a frequenter of coffee-shops, shall by the exhibition of an insubordinate and disobedient head of hair, present the afflicting spectacle of an avowed depravity,

(Signed) RODZOUTO.

The unhappy Rodzouto nearly fainted at the sight of the royal seal affixed to this proclamation, and it was as if in a nightmare that he beheld his son zealously superintending the execution of the royal orders, and urging the arrest of all those unfortunates who still possessed a few hairs upon their heads.

Rodzouto returned in great haste to the palace, and sent his servants to tear off the ridiculous advertisements.

In vain they sought the origin of this new mystification, but the people whispered very low the name of Galibi.

Some more serious fears invaded the minds of the privy councillors, when they perceived that the royal seal had disappeared. The

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courtiers suspected Jocko or Jacka, or even their master, but nobody ventured to express this suspicion, although it is perfectly well known that monkeys, like magpies, have a habit of stealing and hiding all sorts of objects that cannot be of the least use to them. But it would have required considerable courage to accuse the Prince, or even the monkeys; so that the courtiers preferred to imagine a plot, which, it is true, had the merit of incriminating the Prime Minister, and might produce the vacancy of his post if they succeeded in giving it an appearance of probability.

There began then first to be murmurs, and next whispers, and at length it was openly said to the King (with the deepest regret that loyalty imposed such an obligation), that Srinki, his Prime Minister, had several times ventured to blame what he called the King's weakness for his son, and had gone so far as to affirm that Galibi would never be able to govern, unless his subjects were monkeys, and that, in a word, when all the incredible things that had taken

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place in the kingdom for some time past were judged together, it was evident that Galibi alone could have been the author of them. The courtiers came therefore to the conclusion that Srinki must have got hold of the royal seal, and have used it for the purpose of making the King odious and ridiculous, to decide the people and the army to dethrone him; hoping afterwards to hold the reins of government during the minority of the Prince, independently of His Majesty's personal authority and control.

All this story appeared to the King so full of probability, that Srinki was impeached of high treason; and, in spite of his protestations of innocence, condemned to a horrible death by impalement.

The day fixed for the punishment had arrived. A great crowd pressed in all the streets through which the condemned man was to pass, and became compact on the spot where the execution was to take place. Galibi, whose father had forbidden him to go out on that day, from an apprehension lest the cruel

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spectacle might make too deep an impression upon him, had paid no attention to the order of Rodzouto. Dressed in his pelisse, under which he appeared to conceal something, his head covered with his plumed hat, and followed by his monkeys in the same costume, he crossed the town in great leaps and gambols, making faces at all he met, and laughing at them with jibes and sneers. In this way he came to the unhappy Srinki, surrounded by his unfortunate family.

The minister, though rather pale, was firm, and contemplated without trembling the horrible bar of iron, which in an instant was going to be run through his body.

The crowd remained sad and silent, for Srinki had never done harm to anybody, and no one had ever made a complaint about him.

"You are to die the death of a traitor!" said the executioner; "be prepared!"

"I die innocent!" replied the condemned man.

The executioner then seized the pale, on which Galibi immediately began to climb with

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the agility of a monkey. "Hold steady!" he cried to the executioner, who, quite disconcerted on seeing his pale transformed into a climbing-pole, no longer knew what to do with it. As soon as he had recovered from his surprise, the Prince threw himself to the ground, and, with a thousand capers, repeated by Jocko and Jacka, made his way through the crowd; pinching these, scratching those, and leaping over all their heads, he disappeared in the twinkling of an eye.

Meanwhile a paper was observed sticking on the top of the pale, and when the crowd saw this, and saw the quantities of big seals that were attached to it, they called out with one voice "A pardon! a pardon! it's the order of release!" and so it was. Even the royal seal itself was attached to it, the seal that had been so long sought for. Bravos, and cries of joy burst forth all round, and Srinki was borne to his own house in triumph; but the crowd went immediately afterwards before the royal palace, with a seditious clamour, and audible cries of "Death to the monkeys! Down with Galibi!"

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for they began to consider that the Prince had gone beyond the limits of jest—an instant of delay would have involved the death of an innocent man, by the most atrocious tortures;—the public indignation reached its height.

Then there were secret meetings, in which it was decided that Galibi must be got rid of, and that, as he liked the monkeys so well, he should be taken to Monkeyland. All the conspirators drew lots, and two of them were ordered to get possession of the Prince's person.

On the day fixed for carrying him off, they covered themselves with great dark mantles, blackened their faces, and, after having made their way into Galibi's room, hid themselves under the bed, where they were very ill at ease, not venturing to make a movement, and hardly even to breathe. They were reduced at last to envy their destined victim, who, according to his custom, amused himself by running with Jocko and Jacka, by leaping over the tables and chairs, and also exercised himself in uttering piercing cries. If any pity had made them hesitate up to this time in the accomplish-

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ment of their design, the ridiculous spectacle that was before their eyes, and the cramps in their own limbs would have sufficed to harden them in their resolution.

Wearied at last, and conquered by sleep, Galibi allowed himself to be undressed, but he found means of escaping six times running from the hands of his *valet-de-chambre,* threw his slippers at the functionary's head, and slipped his shirt over the valet's face so that he could see nothing. At length, in spite of his cries, the Prince was rolled on the floor with the help of Jocko and Jacka till he lost his breath, and finally put to bed.

The two men waited till he was asleep to come silently out of their hiding-place. They lowered the flame of the lamp so as to have just barely the degree of light which was necessary, and whilst one of them gently lifted up Galibi's head, the other put a gag into his mouth to stifle his cries. In spite of all precautions, the Prince awoke, and was seized with a horrible fear at the sight of these black silent men, who were wrapping him in an immense rug. He

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tried to call out and to struggle, but his cries were smothered in his throat, and he was bound so tightly in the folds of the rug, that he could not stir.

One of the men opened without noise the window that looked upon the gardens, fastened a rope-ladder to it, and descended. When he got to the bottom, he firmly held the ladder whilst his comrade brought the Prince down; then both of them went together to a little hidden door, of which they had procured the key, opened it, and shut it again behind them in order to leave no trace of their passage; after which they began to run as fast as they could, relieving each other from time to time. They soon reached the port, and got quickly upon a ship, which seemed to be waiting for them, and made sail immediately after they had come on board.

Galibi was carried down into a cabin, where his gag was taken away. He took the opportunity of inquiring what it all meant, and got for an answer that he was to be taken to his own country amongst the monkeys, his equals,

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as he was totally unfitted for the government of men.

At first he believed it was a practical joke, and thought no more about the matter.

When they had reached the open sea, he was permitted to go upon deck, and he amused himself for some time with the surprise of the sailors at his inconceivable agility. At one bound he leaped upon the mast, then climbed it, and balanced himself at the top; he ran about the cordage like a cat, executed the most comical capers upon the yards, and seemed, in a word, to consider the ship to be nothing but an excellent gymnasium.

However, after a few days he had had enough of the sailors' applause, and asked at first to be taken back to his father, then commanded; and, seeing that nobody obeyed, he went into one of his furious rages which made him so very like a monkey. He flew at every one he met, trying to scratch and bite them, and if he were not the strongest he dashed himself on the ground, at the risk of killing himself. Then he rolled about convulsively, uttering savage cries,

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until his strength was entirely exhausted. But, far from frightening the sailors as he had expected, his extravagances only amused them more than ever, and they laughed all the more as Galibi's rage became more furious.

Galibi very soon lost all hopes of returning, and he shut himself up in an obstinate silence, and fell into the deepest melancholy. He had forgotten how long it was since he had been removed from the palace, and this voyage seemed interminable to him. One evening, at twilight, he perceived the shores of an immense island, and inquired if the ship would stay there. He received no answer, but when he had dined he felt himself overcome by a torpor impossible to shake off; his heavy eyes closed in spite of himself, his head was heavy and his ideas confused, his limbs had lost their elasticity.

When he awoke from this leaden sleep, artificially produced by opium mixed with his food the evening before, he found himself lying down upon the earth surrounded by solitude. Before him spread the calm and infinite sea,

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and the ship had disappeared. He immediately understood that he had been abandoned.

Near him was a box containing a few things necessary for food and self-defence, and that was all. He had been left alone, without a companion, without a servant—on an island that was most likely uninhabited. What a cruel moment! What bitter thoughts filled his heart, and how many tears he shed! Many an hour did he remain crushed down utterly by his mental anguish, but necessity soon compelled him to seek for shelter, and to find out what sort of a country was this place of exile.

Round him were rocks lying in fragments, separated by pools of muddy water, and here and there tufts of enormous reeds, with their tops reddened, and dried by the scorching sun. But there was not a trace of human life, not a vestige of any habitation.

Galibi had eaten nothing since the preceding evening, and felt himself ill with weakness and giddiness, so he put some biscuits mechanically to his lips for his sustenance. He soon suffered from a burning thirst, without having the means

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of quenching it; all the water that surrounded him was salt water, and he was forced to set off to find out a spring. He walked for at least two hours, on ground which still kept rising, and saw at last a clump of cocoa-nut trees, towards which he made way as fast as his weariness would permit. Thanks to his extreme agility, he was soon in the midst of the fruit-laden branches, still he required some time to get at the precious milk in the inside. Happily his pocket-knife was provided with a strong saw, and he used it to open the nuts.

His thirst being quenched, he sheltered himself as well as he could under the leaves to take rest and be cool, whilst reflecting upon his position.

In the first place he reflected that he must seek for a refuge for the night, for he did not know whether the island might not contain ferocious animals that would put his life in danger. With this intention he came down from the cocoa-nut tree and was going to let himself slip to the ground, when happily he looked beneath him to see where he would set

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his foot, and saw two ruby eyes that shone in the black head of an enormous serpent. He hastily got into the branches again, and used the cocoa-nuts to throw upon the reptile and put it to flight. He much regretted not to have taken the gun that had been placed in the provision-box, and which had no doubt been considered indispensable to his existence. Seized with terror at the idea of all the dangers which his imagination presented, he did not venture to meet the unknown, and resolved to retrace his steps and pass the night near what belonged to him. A slight hope of being relieved by some passing vessel prevented him from leaving the sea-shore for very long together.

When night came, he wrapped himself in the rugs that had been left and tried to sleep; but thinking of his parents whom he had loved so much, of the happy life that he might have led if he had been more reasonable, of his pretty room and his soft bed, he burst into tears, and ended by falling asleep.

The next morning he pursued his researches,

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after having provided himself with his gun and his strong cutlass, in order to discover a place where he might hide his provisions; in case there should be any inhabitants upon the island who might try to take from him what little he possessed. So he followed the same path that he had taken the evening before, and found the cocoa-nut trees, and farther off some banyan-trees and mangoes. Continuing his ascent, he saw a vast plain of lava, upon which grew sugar-canes; and having found there no kind of alarming animal, he sought a crevice in the rock which should serve as a refuge for him. He ended by discovering one that was big enough for his purpose, and at the entrance of it was a little cistern of excellent water, which was certainly supplied by a spring, and he decided to establish himself there provisionally.

Although the sailors had not left Galibi any great quantity of things, it still took him a week's work to carry them all to his new dwelling, which was at a considerable distance from the shore; and although he was extremely

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active, the excessive heat of the country overcame him. When all had been carried, he made a sort of door with great reeds fastened by thongs of flexible bark which he took from the trees, and thus closed the entrance of his cavern. He would have wished to gather for his bed a quantity of the light feathers which formed the tops of the reeds, but he soon discovered that the little isolated marshes in which these plants grew were the refuge of troops of crocodiles, and he was so frightened by them that he kept at a safe distance.

Several months passed thus in a complete solitude, in a heart-breaking desolation, and Galibi was greatly altered. He no longer thought of jesting and doing extravagant things, and he foresaw with dread the time when his provisions would be exhausted. He then wanted to penetrate farther into the island, and to see if it did not offer other means of existence.

The character of the island changed completely in the interior. It was much more fertile there, and Galibi found rice, coffee, yams, and

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maize, which he made use of for his food. He observed also upon the highest rocks many strange nests, constructed with the slime of shell-fish, but, not being a Chinese, he did not perceive that they could be used for food. He found considerable quantities of gold and diamonds, but paid no attention to them whatever, for they were of no conceivable use to him.

One day, after he had walked for many hours towards the sea, he felt suffocated by a smothering heat, and directed his steps towards a vast and dense forest, to gather fruit, and take rest in the shade. It was a thicket of bamboos, tamarinds, and banyans, above which magnificent cocoa-nut trees rose to a height of sixty or eighty feet. Galibi did not intend to penetrate into the forest on that day; he gathered some figs, and, overcome by fatigue and an increasing oppression, not daring to rest upon the grass for fear of serpents and scorpions, he climbed a tree and sheltered himself in it as well as he was able.

The air was like a furnace, the sea-breeze did

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not blow, and all nature was silent as if in expectation of some catastrophe. Towards evening, repeated growlings of thunder shook the air, dried up by a wind of fire; it was the *simoom!* It passed like a whirlwind over the forest, illuminated by flashes of lightning, and such was its violence that Galibi, clinging with all his might to the branch which served him as a refuge, was flung about as if he had been on an enormous swing; sometimes he almost touched the earth, and at others rose suddenly into the air.

Soon a torrent of rain succeeded the hot wind, and, although wet to the skin, Galibi felt himself a new creature. At length he could breathe, his courage returned. As he had remained on the border of the wood, he saw the shore from his retreat and perceived an object that attracted his attention. The more he looked, the more it seemed to him like a human body stretched upon the sand. When day broke, and the rain ceased, he went down to look at it, and found a drowned man, cast upon the coast by the tempest. No doubt

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some vessel had been wrecked during the night, and both cargo and crew were lost! "Ah!" thought Galibi, "if some of the men belonging to the crew had been thrown alive upon the island, I might have had a companion!". At this moment it seemed to him that he heard a noise of distant voices; and, with a heart agitated by hope, he ran to his place of concealment, not daring to show himself all at once for fear of alarming the newly-arrived people. He did not look very like a Prince by this time, he looked scarcely like a human being; his clothes were mere rags, his hair and his nails were of an outrageous length, and his whole appearance was so extraordinary that he might easily inspire terror at first sight.

The voices quickly came nearer, and soon a dozen frightful savages came to the place which Galibi had just left. They were little and black, with woolly hair, red eyes, flat noses, and the lower jaw projecting; they all bore bows and arrows, and feathers of different colours served them for belts and headdresses. As soon as they perceived the body of the shipwrecked

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man, they uttered a deafening noise, and executed an infernal dance around it. Then having procured sharp shells, they began to cut up the body, and divided it amongst them. This horrible feast made Galibi shudder to the marrow of his bones, and he hid himself as he best could, remaining perfectly quiet, and fancying he saw a band of demons ready to devour him; these cannibals filled him with as much disgust as horror. Happily they soon went away, and Galibi never saw them again; but a new fear had now taken possession of his mind, and he resolved to seek a refuge in the heart of the forest and to fix himself there. It would be necessary, it is true, to avoid the jungles, where he heard the growls of tigers, hyænas, lions, and jackals; the marshes, infested by crocodiles, the tall grass, in which the boa constrictor watches for his prey; but in this life of danger and fatigue he soon acquired the courage and address of a savage.

After much seeking, he was attracted by the noise of the birds to a place where the forest made a magnificent hall of verdure. The

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trunks of the banyan trees rose in columns to support a vault of creepers that ran from crest to crest, and fell in graceful festoons, making a sort of tent, through which the daylight hardly penetrated—softened, cooled, and without any glitter or brightness; several springs ran clearly, and fruit abounded. Quantities of monkeys leaped among the branches, which shaded the huts of ourang-outangs, made of bamboo-twigs covered with palm-leaves, and placed at a considerable elevation. Galibi wondered if it would be prudent to show himself; but he was so weary of his sad existence that he left everything to chance, and thought that he would as willingly be knocked on the head by ourang-outangs as devoured by cannibals. His eyes were accustomed to the half-light of this strange place, and he was not long without perceiving a monkey of large size, frightfully like a man, but still young, which amused itself by throwing stones into the water, and uttered from time to time a hoarse harsh cry to express pleasure; at these times his hairy face made horrible grimaces, and Galibi, forgetting his old

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affection for monkeys, would have liked to get away as far as he possibly could. He took courage from the possession of an excellent double-barrelled gun, which he always carried with him ready cocked, though he only used it to defend himself in case of danger, as he had to be very careful of his ammunition.

Galibi's attention was turned from the ourang-outang by a cracking of branches in the neighbouring thicket, and before he could guess the cause, an enormous wild sow, followed by her young ones, threw herself upon the ourang-outang, which, having his head turned the other way, was not aware of her approach. The violence of the attack was such that the monkey fell immediately, uttering fearful cries, whilst Galibi fired both barrels and stretched the wild sow dead. At the cries of the young ourang-outang, and at the sound of the shots, a troop of great monkeys came, filling the air with frightful howlings. In an instant they surrounded Galibi in a menacing manner, and the unfortunate youth imagined that he was going to be torn to pieces. Then the young

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ourang-outang rose eagerly and ran to place himself before his protector, whose shoulders and hands he caressed with marks of profound gratitude; then he led him to the body of the sow, which he trampled upon with rage till he was weary and out of breath. No doubt he made his fellows understand that he took Galibi under his protection, for from that moment the monkeys showed him no signs of hostility. As for the young ourang-outang, he continued to show Galibi marks of the strongest affection, and often brought him both fruit and shell-fish.

Galibi then settled in this place, and set himself to live the life of the ourang-outangs. He made himself a hut like theirs, dressed himself in the fur of the wild beasts that he killed for the purpose, and as his beard grew when he became a man, and his hair was very long, he had very much the look of a wild animal.

Although he had become used to this extraordinary existence, in consequence of the force of circumstances, he still very often went to the sea-shore; and, after taking the greatest precau-

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tions—eye and ear attentive to the slightest sign of the cannibals—he remained watching for days together, awaiting the arrival of a vessel that might deliver him. Then it seemed as if his heart would break at last in this long anxiety of hope continually deferred, and he returned to the monkeys, more and more overcome with sadness and discouragement.

Several years had now passed away since he had been abandoned upon this immense island; when one day, as he looked absently at the sea, it seemed to him that he perceived a sail on the horizon. What an emotion thrilled through all his being! How he watched the sail approaching little by little! Soon he made it out to be a ship. Ah! most probably it would take another direction, and leave him at the last minute, and his cries would not be loud enough to be heard by the distant crew—but no! the ship came straight to the island. Had his father discovered his place of exile, and had he sent to deliver him? A thousand thoughts, tumultuous, contradictory, jostled each other in his brain. At length, seeing that the ship was

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about to cast anchor, he hid himself, so as to see what was going forward without being himself observed.

A boat quitted the ship with three men in it. One of them observed the island with the help of a telescope, and the two others rowed. The boat landed in the little bay, and two of the men walked forward, leaving the third to guard the boat.

Born in the East, Galibi had never beheld a European, so he was surprised by the appearance of the strangers, and remained prudently in his hiding-place, not knowing whether it might not be a new race of cannibals.

The man who came first was very tall, and so thin that his limbs seemed to have more than necessary accommodation even in his tight nankeen dress, which had long lost its first freshness and cleanliness. Completely opposed to the lightness of this material was a great red woollen comforter, that wound several times about his stork-like neck, and proved its length of faithful service by its crumpled appearance. This young foreigner possessed in addition a

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pair of very round eyes, of an undecided blue, protected by spectacles, and a nose very happily shaped so as to carry these last in perfect security; a wide mouth, with thin lips, adorned with a moustache of an unnatural colour, very like tow; long and meagre locks of hair, that the slightest breeze seemed likely to carry away; and an expression of countenance, at the same time good-natured, profound, and flurried. An immense chip hat, garnished with a green veil, covered his head, and produced a very strong contrast with the red comforter.

"Hermann," said the young stranger to the domestic who accompanied him, "do you suppose that this island can be inhabited?"

"How can I tell, Mr. Franz? If we meet with any men I shall say that the island is inhabited; but if we don't I shall conclude that it isn't."

"Hermann," replied Mr. Franz, sharply, "I wish you would get rid of the bad habit to which I have often called your attention, and which consists in answering at hap-hazard, without having completely apprehended the

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meaning of a question. In the present case I did not say, 'Hermann, is this island inhabited?' for how should you know? but I said, 'Hermann, do you *suppose* that this island *can* be inhabited?' which is quite different; indeed you ought to observe, that I appeal to your intuitive faculties of judgment, and not——"

"As to that, Mr. Franz, it's just as you like," replied Hermann, who puffed like a seal; "but if you will listen to me, I could pay attention much better there, under the trees; one's mind is a deal livelier in the shade than it is in the blazing sunshine, where one sweats like a Spanish water-bottle," and he walked quickly towards the forest.

Franz stopped him suddenly. "Do you think so?" he exclaimed. "In what circumstances have you made this observation? It may concern the progress of science in the highest degree; for indeed, if the mental faculties are capable of a more perfect concentration in shade than in sunshine, it necessarily follows——"

"That we had better go there," said Her-

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mann, who immediately proceeded to put his theory into practice.

"Notwithstanding the lightness of thy brain, thou hast sometimes ideas which, if ripened and developed, would not be without a certain value; unhappily thou throwest them like—like——"

"Pearls before pigs," innocently suggested Hermann, wishing to help his master.

"Thou sayest?" asked Franz, looking severely at his servant.

"I say, like pearls before swine," replied Hermann, with an innocent desire to make himself agreeable; "it's in a fable that I learned at school when I was a boy, only I made a mistake the first time, because I didn't exactly recollect it."

Franz contented himself with shrugging his shoulders, after having looked at his domestic in a perplexed manner for some time, and continued to walk on in silence, gradually unwinding the folds of his comforter, which seemed to protect an organ so delicate that it was absolutely out of the question to risk the application of soap. All at once Franz appeared to be

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struck by a new idea; he stopped short, and said, with the utmost calm,—

"Hermann!"

"Mr. Franz?"

"Just you go a little in advance, will you, and see if there are any wild beasts in the forest?"

"What, Mr. Franz? And if there are any?" exclaimed Hermann, evidently much alarmed.

"Well, if there are any you'll come back and tell me; it's very simple."

"Very simple, very simple. And if they attack me?"

"Haven't you got your gun? and as to that," he went on, with the air of a man decided to overcome every objection, "*I shall follow you!*"

This last argument did not appear to have overcome all Hermann's scruples, for he advanced towards the forest with such cautious steps that he and his master still kept very near together, which did not prevent him from often looking back.

Arrived at the entrance of the forest, Franz called his servant with a much louder voice

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than the necessity of the case seemed to warrant. Absorbed in his thoughts, he imagined that Hermann had got a good way ahead of him. "What do you see?" he cried.

"A great many trees, Mr. Franz, and no beasts."

"Oh, so much the worse," exclaimed the *savant*, in a tone of serious vexation, coming up with his servant.

"So much the worse! but I say so much the better," cried Hermann, dropping down on the moss, and wiping the perspiration that streamed down his big face; and he went on murmuring "So much the worse! he says, so much the worse that there are not wild beasts everywhere to eat poor folk. A Christian wouldn't say so." And seeing that his master was about to answer, he repeated with emphasis, whilst fanning himself with his great check pocket-handkerchief, "a Christian wouldn't say so."

"Stop a little, Hermann; do just learn to reason a little, for really you do mix up all sorts of ideas in a horrible muddle. What has your Christian to do here?"

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"Alas! Mr. Franz, you know better than I do. As for me, I consider that the right place for a good Christian, at this time of day, is before a great dish of sourkrout, well garnished with smoked sausages, and before a creamy mug of beer, such as we drink at home, with a pipe of tobacco; and not in islands where we are to serve for sausages to wild beasts;" and, as he finished his sentence, and no doubt to shake off the thoughts of the lamentable fate for which he was reserved, Hermann began first to stuff and afterwards to smoke vigorously an immense pipe of painted porcelain that came from the Fatherland.

"Wretched chatterer and glutton!" cried Franz, this time really irritated, "I asked what your Christian had to do with the question, when the subject did not concern a Christian, but a man of science. For, as you know, it is from the love of science that I undertook this long and perilous voyage; it is to make my name illustrious by discovery, to add my grain of sand to the great edifice. Think!

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think! Hermann," he continued, exciting himself by degrees, "what an honour, what fame for me, if I bring back to my country one plant, one metal, one animal hitherto unknown; and be sure that I shall spare neither labour nor fatigue, and be deterred by no danger."

At this instant Hermann and Franz executed, at the same moment, a bound of surprise and terror; the branch of the tree on which sat Galibi had just broken with a great noise, and had thrown him at the feet of the two explorers. All three remained motionless, and it was with mutual dread that they awaited the first movement. Hermann, however, who, in his emotion, had let drop his porcelain pipe, stooped mechanically to recover his treasure, and Galibi seeing nothing hostile in this action, rose up and held out supplicating hands to these strangers; hands so black, and adorned with nails of such length, that they appeared formidable claws to Franz, and he called out in a strangely altered voice, "An ourang-outang!"

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The scene then became really comic. As Galibi went a step forward, Franz and Hermann went two steps back, and the most touching expressions that Galibi endeavoured to put upon his countenance were taken by the travellers for nothing but monkey-antics.

Still this exercise could not last for ever, and Galibi made up his mind to stand quite still. He crossed his hands as a sign of peace, then he stood at his full height (he had grown wonderfully during his savage life) and began to implore the pity of the two foreigners by telling them his story in his own language. "Hermann!" cried Franz, with enthusiasm, "Hermann, from this day I go down to posterity. I leave far behind me such naturalists as the Bontins, Tyson, Nieremberg, and Dapper—it is I, and I alone, to whom belongs the honour of having discovered the ourang-outang *which speaks.*"

"Do you call *that* speaking, Mr. Franz?" asked Hermann, with an amazed look. "Well, Mr. Franz, if he talks, what does he say?"

"What does he say! what does he say! how

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can I tell? and what on earth does it matter? The great point is that he talks—that's the capital discovery. Do you suppose that we are taught the language of the ourang-outangs at the University?"

"Oh, I thought that you learned everything there," replied Hermann, with an intentionally innocent air; "but then, Mr. Franz, if they were not *real words* that he says, but only gibberish to mock at us with. It might be so, easily enough, for monkeys are deeper than anybody thinks." And Hermann looked at his master with a coarse laugh, thinking it not a bad subject for pleasantry.

Meanwhile Galibi went on with his story, and Franz studied him scrupulously with his double-glass, making his observations to Hermann, who studied him also, but from the point of view of attack and defence, and not at all scientifically. "Look," said Franz, "this ourang-outang differs essentially from all the races known up to the present date. It is not the *Nocturnal Man* of Linnæus, which has a whistling sort of voice, and is

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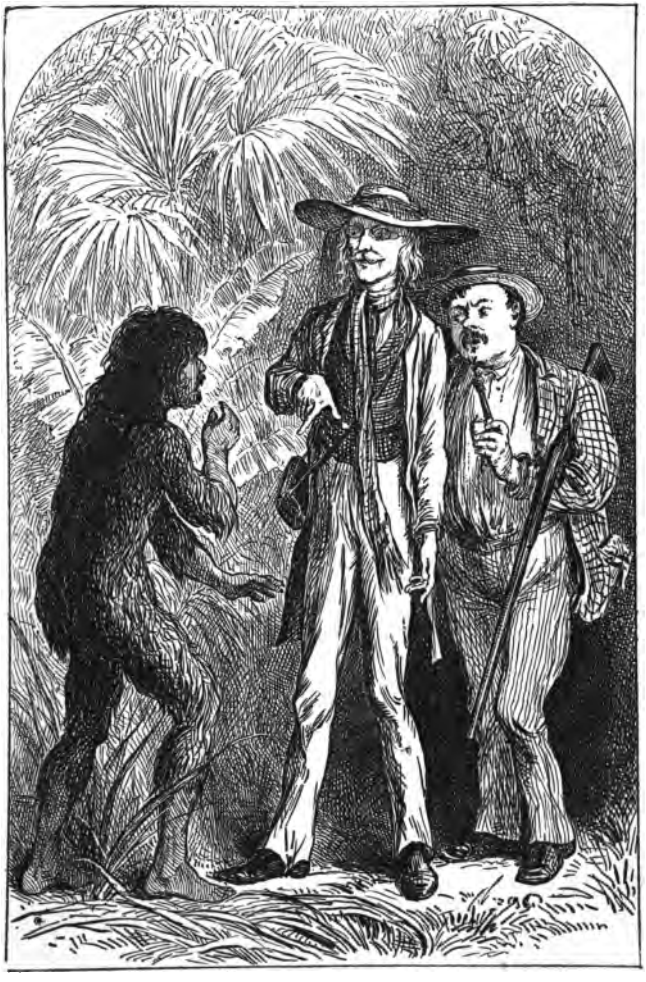

THE TALKING MONKEY.

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only half as big as this one. It is not, either, the *Pongo* of Battel, which has no calves to its legs, and cannot speak, nor the *Quimpeze* or *Chimpanzee* of M. de la Brosse, which has a flat nose and flat ears, without lobes. Still less is it the *Mandrillo*, which has a bluish skin, or the *Gibbon*, with long arms."

"Upon my word, Mr. Franz," replied Hermann, rather out of patience with his master's long discourse, of which he understood very little, "I hear well enough that you tell me what the beast isn't, and without having been at the University I can tell you, too, that it isn't a stone, for it can walk, and it isn't either my father or my mother, for it doesn't look like either of them; but you're no wiser after this than you were before, so how would it be if I told you exactly what it *is?*"

"*You!*" exclaimed Franz, with a look of mingled surprise and discouragement, "can it belong to a species already classed?"

"It's nothing but a savage of this island, and if you follow my advice, Mr. Franz, we shall put

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ourselves at a safe distance from such an ugly fellow."

"Ignorant wretch! So this is the way that you speak of a superb specimen. This individual, as you might know if you had studied the works relative to this subject, this individual differs yet more from the savages of this part of the world than from the species of monkeys which I have described. No, no, Hermann," he went on, warming himself with his subject, "this is not a vulgar monkey, of which the scientific world knows every detail, and which is stuffed for museums of natural history. This is, or will be, the 'Talking Monkey,' or *Simius Loquax*, of the *savant* Franz Graupen, brought back by him from his voyages round the world. O, Gretchen!" went on the young *savant*, with a tenderer voice, fixing his eyes passionately on Galibi, and stretching forth his arms, "once more do I behold thee, thou appearest unto me in thy modest pride, thy soft emotion!"

"What, Mr. Franz!" cried Hermann, seriously alarmed, and rudely shaking his master by the sleeve to recall him to himself, "has this

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hot sun broiled your brains till you take a savage——"

"The *Simius Loquax!*" interposed Franz, with authority.

"Loquax as much as you like—for the good Fraülein Gretchen, your betrothed, that you ought to know well enough, for you have been engaged nine years and seven months, as you often tell me."

"Nine years and *eight* months, my friend, for it's already a month since I last spoke to you on the subject. But this is not what concerns us at present, and I have not lost my senses, as you appear to apprehend; I yielded to a movement of involuntary enthusiasm at the sight of the precious discovery which will bring me back to my patient Gretchen, covered with glory, for now I have accomplished my work, and we return immediately."

"We are going home, Mr. Franz? really? we are going home? What a misfortune that we haven't a pot of beer to drink to such a piece of good news, and in such hot weather too! Ah, when I get back I'll drain many a one dry

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to make up for lost time. Well, let us go back then. What's the good of stopping here to dry like herrings?"

"Stop a minute, stop a minute! it's true that we are going back, but we have to take the *Simius Loquax* with us. Attention!" continued the *savant*, without deigning to notice the cloud of disappointment that spread over the open countenance of his servant. "We must act with great art and circumspection, for these monkeys are very suspicious, and their anger is dangerous, so you shall walk backwards, keeping your face to the animal, whilst I, placed behind you, make signs of friendship and persuasion to induce him to follow us." And as Hermann displayed great slowness, and a visible repugnance to obey his master's orders, the latter, whilst making gestures of invitation to Galibi, explained to him that the interests of science imperiously required him to take care of his personal safety.

Galibi, eager to make acquaintance with the strangers, approached timidly, whilst Franz, on his side, congratulated himself upon the seduc-

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tive eloquence of his gestures, and multiplied them till his light locks of hair, his green veil, and the ends of his red comforter floated around his head in a harmonious mixture. Hermann foresaw that the situation was likely to last, and having no longer any disquietude on the subject of the evil intentions that the ourang-outang might have with regard to his person, took out his porcelain pipe, stuffed it at his leisure, and puffed away philosophically, leaving his master to perform an expressive pantomime behind his back. The pipe ended, he began to be impatient, and called out at last with an air of conviction, "Mr. Franz, this savage——"

"This *Simius Loquax*, or Talking Monkey, if the latter is easier for you, Hermann; but I insist upon calling things and people by their proper names, it's very useful. Well, what?"

"Well, this savage talking simia (I hope that's right), he wants as much to follow us as you want to get him to come after you. I am sure that if we were to go quietly towards the boat he would come too, you'll see! And

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besides, I'm as hungry as a wolf, and you must be hungry too, for they say that to look lovingly empties the stomach, but I cannot tell whether looking so at a *loquax* monkey does the same." Hermann had begun to walk at the commencement of his speech, and Franz was obliged to keep ahead of him if he would keep Hermann between himself and the monkey, but he looked round from time to time with much anxiety, dreading lest the cause of his future glory might suddenly be lost to him. To his great astonishment, Galibi followed him step by step, and Hermann cried out often with a triumphant air, "You see, Mr. Franz, you see that I was right."

"Yes, yes, I have fascinated him!" replied the *savant*, hardly able to conquer his own pride.

But the moment of getting into the boat was the strangest, and Franz appealed to the heroism of his domestic, warning him that no doubt it would be necessary to employ their united strength to compel the *Simius Loquax* to profit by the advantages of civilization; but both of them remained struck with in-

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expressible astonishment when they saw Galibi jump lightly into the boat, and settle himself in it with the ease of a reasonable being.

In spite of his good manners, Franz and Hermann put themselves as far from the ourang-outang as the length of their boat permitted, and watched his slightest gestures attentively during the whole time that the little voyage lasted, until they reached the ship.

Galibi had hardly got upon the deck when he desired to give free play to his gratitude towards his liberator. He tried to throw himself at his feet, and to seize his hands to kiss them, but Franz, who was just telling the sailors with what deep artifices he had succeeded in getting possession of this dangerous animal, mistook the intentions of his captive, and believing himself to be the object of a sudden attack, gave orders to chain him up immediately.

When Galibi saw himself thus treated as a criminal, and without understanding for what offence, he almost began to regret his companions the ourang-outangs, who had at least permitted him to settle amongst them without

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troubling him in any way, and he anxiously wondered what his life would be like amongst these cruel men, who loaded him with chains? His pain was so bitter that he refused all nourishment, withdrew into a corner, and spoke no more.

Franz, who intended to study all the peculiarities of the animal, and to take note of them for his famous report to the Academy of Sciences, went immediately to his big register and wrote: "The *Simius Loquax* resembles the species of ourang-outang described by the Chevalier d'Obsonville in this particular, namely, that when reduced to captivity he shows signs of grief and disquiet, rather than ferocity; nevertheless, his first attack upon our person, immediately after our arrival on board, was so terrible and so menacing that we were compelled, to our great regret, to chain up the animal in order to make it impossible for him to do us any injury."

Franz became anxious about his monkey's sadness, and especially about his prolonged fast —if he were to lose him before reaching

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Europe! Perhaps he would be imperfectly embalmed, and then jealous people would be ready to deny that he had ever spoken. What anxieties! and with how much gentleness, and how many caresses, he tried to persuade the animal to take a little nourishment. Galibi could not understand these proceedings, he was cared for, spoiled, nursed; they gave him the best food in the ship, and yet at the same time they kept him rigorously and narrowly chained up—these men were incomprehensible! Galibi remembered also that he was a Prince, and did not wish to be treated as an inferior; and one day when Franz's cover was laid in the cabin, Galibi sat down with dignity in the place of the *savant*, who, petrified with admiration, but soon overcoming his astonishment, ordered Hermann to lay another cover and serve the dinner to see what the monkey would do. He tasted all the dishes, and ate as elegantly as his chains permitted; and all the crew were admitted to witness the astonishing spectacle. The same evening the following remarks were added to the register:—

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"Like the ourang-outang of Borneo, described by Vosmaer, the *Simius Loquax* eats all that is offered him, bread, vegetables, fruits, fish, game, and drinks wine. But, far superior to the ourang-outang of Vosmaer, which had to be taught the use of a spoon and fork, of a napkin and a glass, the talking monkey (*Simius Loquax*) has by his own instinct of imitation copied and put in practice all the details and minute observances belonging to civilized life, and that in a remarkably short space of time. At the end of *four days* he sat down at our table and behaved like a human person. The fact can be certified by all the sailors of the crew, who have been witnesses of it."

The joy of the young *savant* was not, however, pure and unmixed; but is there such a thing as perfect happiness in the world? Jealousy made him suffer cruelly, and not without reason. Hermann seemed to have monopolized all the talking monkey's confidence. In vain Franz kept the animal in his own cabin for hours together, and offered him good things to win his affections; Galibi,

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who was deeply wounded by all this behaviour, and especially by the unlimited curiosity with reference to him which Franz was at no pains to conceal, seized every opportunity of escaping from his indefatigable and indiscreet observer. As soon as he could, he ran to Hermann, who received him more simply, let him smoke his porcelain pipe, and tried to teach him his own language. The honest and obstinate Hermann sometimes consented to speak of Galibi as the *Simius Loquax*, to please his master; but his conviction that the creature was a savage was not shaken in the least, and he treated him as such. He was convinced also that the sounds pronounced by the talking monkey had a meaning, if they were not a real language; but he did not breathe a word of this subversive theory before his master, from the dread of incurring a refutation too scientific for his understanding and too lengthy for his patience.

Nevertheless the talking monkey obstinately refused to reply to any of the names with which he had been diversely and generously honoured. To each of these he replied invariably "Galibi,"

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hoping that people would understand that he wished to be called by that name. Struck by hearing the same sounds so frequently repeated, Hermann tried to reproduce them, ended by succeeding, and ever afterwards Galibi answered to his call. This important event was immediately entered amongst the notes: "The *Simius Loquax* surpasses in every way all the monkeys known up to the present date, even the celebrated female ourang of Mr. Harwood, which, he affirmed, often distinctly pronounced the syllables yaa-hou, insisting forcibly on the latter. The talking monkey, *Simius Loquax*, pronounces *three* syllables, and not *two*, with such clearness, that the whole crew has learned to repeat them after him. He recognizes them in the mouths of the sailors, and answers to them as to a name; they are the syllables Ga-li-bi, of which I have formed a proper name to be borne by the animal, which is now commonly called Galibi."

The poor Prince was far from suspecting the studies which Franz made upon him, or the singular discoveries of which he was the object. He had never suspected that he might be taken

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for an animal (so true it is that we never know ourselves, and never see ourselves as we are); but, from the way in which he was treated, he perceived that he excited a lively curiosity amongst these strangers, and even admitted that he might possibly have been taken for a savage; and, as he was far from being stupid, he endeavoured to correct this false impression by all the means in his power. He applied all his abilities to understand and learn the language that was spoken around him, and his progress was such that Franz was now alone in attributing such a degree of intelligence to a monkey, even were it a talking monkey.

The second step that Galibi made towards the object he wished to attain was to make the sailors understand that he wished to change the furs that covered him for clothes like their own; and each of them, curious to see the effect of the change upon the appearance of the ourang, willingly contributed. One gave a pair of trousers, another a shirt, another a waistcoat, &c., with which Galibi joyously retreated to his cabin. Hermann followed him

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as his *valet-de-chambre*, and the sailors thought the delay was long, for considering the time they passed at this *toilette*, Hermann must have lavished all his art upon it, and Galibi must have been as careful as a dandy.

They reappeared at length, after being absent a whole hour; but Galibi's transformation was so complete, so incredible, that the sailors fancied at first that another person must have been substituted for him; however, a little reflection made them immediately remember that there was nobody on board whom they did not know, and that consequently this young and vigorous sailor whom they had before their eyes could be none other than he whom they had hitherto named the ourang-outang. The long matted hair and the unkempt beard, which had made him look like a wild beast, had been carefully cut by Hermann, as well as the nails. Pailfuls of hot water, a scrubbing-brush, and soft soap, were the cosmetics employed to restore its primitive colour to the skin; not an easy matter, considering the thick crust that covered it. In the heroic

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efforts that Hermann made to attain his object, he did not always spare his patient's skin, but the latter bore all with a Stoic's courage, and even gave signs of gratitude to his tormentor.

The thorough cleansing being finished, Galibi put on his sailor's costume, and, in spite of the smarting scratches that covered his body, he felt more at ease and lighter under this foreign dress than he had been for several years. As for Hermann, he wept with ecstasy before his work, drawing all the time great puffs from his porcelain pipe, and before letting Galibi go upon deck he threw himself on his neck, and nearly smothered him in his arms. He looked upon him as his own child.

As soon as the sailors were quite convinced of Galibi's identity, they all congratulated him in their rough way with hurrahs and hand-shakings of such a cordial character, that the noisy expression of them soon attracted Franz. On seeing Galibi, and the ovation of which he was the object, the learned man received the shock of a painful astonishment. What! these men who had seen the talking monkey after

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his capture, in his natural state, could make such a blunder as to take him for a man!—but in that case what would people think who only saw him after he had become civilized? The learned bodies would certainly deny the important discovery, does not jealousy ever act thus?—and the ignorant mass of the public would be only too much disposed to sustain this negation on learning to what a degree the *Simius Loquax* possessed the gift of tongues. Thus the very proofs which Franz could appeal to in support of his discovery would become an unanswerable argument in the service of his enemies—what was to be done? One thing at least had become imperative in this pressing danger, and that was to put a stop immediately to the education of the *ourang-outang*, before it produced such disastrous results. With this intention, Franz made a speech to the sailors, in which he reproached them for encouraging ridiculous pretensions in his monkey, and habits of insubordination. If they accustomed it to be treated as a reasonable being, he added, what would be the poor animal's sensations when it was sent to the different

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scientific societies of Europe shut up in a cage, as in a menagerie? Happily for Galibi, he as yet understood the language spoken by Franz very imperfectly, or else what would have been his terrors at the prospect of the fate in reserve for him? He had, however, rather a bitter foretaste of it when Franz put the chains on him again, from which he had already been for some time delivered.

But other ideas and other hopes began shortly to awaken in his heart. It seemed to him that the coasts now visible from the ship were not unknown to him, and as it advanced, vague reminiscences came to him from time to time like a perfume breathed long ago. Little by little, the landmarks became familiar to him; and one day, when the fog slowly lifted its curtain from the near shore, he suddenly beheld the sun shine upon his own land! Ah! how quickly he recognized it, and how his heart leaped towards it! But misfortune teaches us to be careful, and necessity suggests concealment. Galibi hid his trouble in his own breast and mastered his emotion; but when night came he went to seek

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for Hermann, and made him understand his thoughts and his desires. The poor man was so moved that he continued to smoke his pipe vigorously, though it had gone out a quarter of an hour before, but he did not perceive it in the confusion of his meditations. When, however, Galibi threw himself on his knees, holding his chains out towards him in a supplicating manner, he could bear it no longer, and began to file them ardently till the prisoner was free. Then they threw themselves into each other's arms, and embraced each other for a long time; after which Galibi threw himself resolutely into the sea to reach the coast, whilst Hermann, lost in the grief of separation, followed him with his eyes and actually forgot to smoke.

Notwithstanding all his strength and skill, Galibi was twenty times on the point of drowning; happily, the sea was calm; and as soon as he felt exhausted he lay on his back, to begin his labour again when he had regained a little strength. After unheard-of efforts, he reached the shore, and no longer felt his fatigue, he was near the capital of his own kingdom!

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What was he to do now, and to whom should he address himself? He could not venture to present himself suddenly to his parents, in the fear lest a joy so unexpected might have a lamentable effect. He did not dare to name himself to the people, thinking how much he was likely to be detested for past faults; at last he determined to go and seek out his nurse, who he was sure would know him again, notwithstanding the change in his appearance. He went before dawn to the house of this good woman, and was not deceived in his hopes. She recognized him immediately by his family likeness, and expressed the greatest delight at seeing him. Her first emotion calmed, she informed him that his father and mother had both died not very long before, and that several pretenders were disputing the throne, but that none of them had hitherto succeeded in making himself accepted as the legitimate heir of Rodzouto. Many affirmed that they were the real Galibi, and invented extraordinary stories to account for their long absence; however, not one of them had hitherto succeeded in opening the door of

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the royal palace, closed by the will of the sovereign, after his death, and of which only the rightful heir knew the secret from generation to generation. She added, however, that an ambitious prince of the neighbourhood had promised the most magnificent recompense to the locksmith skilful enough to make a key that would open the door, and that messengers had been sent abroad to fetch the cleverest locksmiths in all the world. One of these, after having employed the most mysterious means, and worked in secret for thirteen days and thirteen nights, openly boasted that he had succeeded; and the ambitious prince, Mahjadah, was to go that very day, in great state, to open the door of the palace. This greatly tormented the good nurse, who could not foresee by what means her beloved Galibi would oppose the usurpation of the throne and make himself known; but he tranquillized her and begged her only to procure him the clothes necessary to his rank, which she immediately hastened to do.

After dinner there was a great noise of trumpets, cymbals, and tambourines all through-

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out the city. It was the Prince Mahjadah, who was about to open the door of the palace before the crowd, to prove his rights. Galibi followed him closely, without being noticed.

After a brilliant flourish of trumpets, the ambitious pretender came forward on his great black horse, caparisoned with pure gold. Intoxicated with pride, he climbed the steps of the palace without descending from his horse, and resolutely inserted the key in the lock. O, happiness! it fitted capitally, and made the bolt go well in each direction—still the door refused to open. In his impatience, Mahjadah flung the key to a distance and successively tried a bunch of other keys, with no better result. Then Galibi ascended, in his turn, the outer stair of the palace; with a gesture of disdain he pushed aside the robber who had been trying to despoil him of his inheritance, then, having uncovered himself and bowed profoundly before the door, in token of respect, he said to it three times, and with a voice so loud and clear that everyone heard it, from one end of the great square to the other,—

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"Godmother, open to Galibi, son and heir of Rodzouto!" and the first time they heard a great noise of bolts withdrawn, and screeching locks.

"Godmother, open to Galibi, son and heir of Rodzouto!" and the ponderous door shook upon its hinges, and, trembling, stood ajar.

"Godmother, open to Galibi, son and heir of Rodzouto!" repeated the prince for the third time, and the two halves of the folding door opened wide with a great noise to let pass the lawful heir; for this door was the fairy godmother of the princes of this family, and faithfully guarded their right.

At the sight of this prodigy the multitude was seized with a delirious joy, and bore Galibi with acclamation to the throne of his fathers. Adversity had made him compassionate, and his own past faults had taught him indulgence; he governed his people wisely, and attained to an extreme old age, beloved by all his subjects. He put his old nurse in a most comfortable position, and, having finished learning the language of Franz, he had the pleasure of

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reading the curious memoir which that young *savant* submitted to his learned brethren, in which he deplored the suicide of the *Simius Loquax* which had deprived him of the pleasure of exhibiting it before the scientific societies. To console him for this misadventure, Galibi sent him (without any explanation), by a special ambassador, the order of the *Zodiac* in diamonds, with a liberal pension for his domestic, Hermann. Thus Franz Graupen had the satisfaction of saying, that if he had not been a prophet in his own country, there had at least been found in distant lands a Prince sufficiently intelligent and sufficiently learned to appreciate at its full value, and in all its importance, the discovery of the *Simius Loquax*, or, in the vulgar tongue, The Talking Monkey.

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THE GLOW-WORM.

MAURICE was nearly fifteen years old ; he was an only son, rich, worshipped by his parents; he enjoyed excellent health, did his work easily with the village clergyman, who was his tutor, and did it fairly well. He ought to have been perfectly happy, yet he had not the glad, open countenance 'of youth; and of late his mother had observed, with anxiety, that his laugh became less frequent, that he avoided his old companions, no longer took his part in games, and remained for whole evenings together without opening his lips, and with his forehead all in wrinkles. This change in his demeanour had not escaped the attention of his father, who

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gently laughed at him for his melancholy and taciturn behaviour, which wounded him to the quick, and made him pass the greater part of his hours of liberty in solitary walks. His parents, seeing that he was not disposed to take them into his confidence, thought it best to feign a perfect indifference, and not to seem aware that there was anything peculiar in his conduct.

The secret evil from which Maurice suffered was presumption. Brought up at home by his parents, who loved him tenderly, he had got into the habit of believing that their affection was the result of his rare and exceptional qualities. Working with the village clergyman, along with the sons of farmers, to whom any high education would have been useless, he thought himself a phenix by comparison as soon as he could translate pretty easily a few phrases of Greek and Latin. Endowed by nature with a lively and clear intelligence and a very good memory, his progress was rapid; his master was proud of him, his friends praised him, and he himself began to think that he was

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a superior being. He began to amuse himself by stringing rhymes together, then went so far as to compose odes, and at last, having acquired an absolute faith in his own abilities, composed a tragedy in five acts and in verse, which he called "Nero." Up to this time he had shown his attempts to his father, a man of culture and taste, who received his productions as they deserved, that is to say, without attributing to them more consequence than really belonged to them, but at the same time without discouraging the author, whilst he gave him the benefit of judicious yet indulgent criticisms. Maurice, who thought that his own verses were charming or superb, expected an enthusiastic admiration, and, not receiving this, kept his labours secret; whilst in his own heart he accused his father of ignorance and incapacity, and considered himself a genius misunderstood. In the family conversations on winter evenings, round the fire, he had acquired a taste for the higher literature, had got accustomed to take an interest in serious thoughts, in the discoveries of science, in works of art; and seeing that his

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comrades and the friends who surrounded him understood nothing about such things, and, not remembering that they had been carefully inculcated in his own mind by others, he persuaded himself more and more that he was a genius out of his sphere, and now only aspired to take his place amongst the celebrities of his time, whose equal he considered himself to be.

These vain thoughts were communicated to no one, and Maurice kept a close watch on all his words, in order not to betray himself; he felt apprehensive that his father would either remonstrate with him, or else laugh at him, two things which he equally dreaded.

He had read somewhere that the poets sought inspiration in the contemplation of Nature, and he often went in pursuit of poetical impressions in the fields, by the borders of rivers, or in the depths of the forest. If he had admired a sunset, observed the grace of a flower hanging from its stalk, or enjoyed the refreshing murmur of a stream, he went through these sensations over again in his memory, to have the pleasure of assuring himself that he felt like a poet;

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though he admitted internally that to express all that in magnificent and moving rhymes presented some farther difficulty, but use and practice would soon overcome these obstacles. "And as for that," he said to himself, "what is the mere expression?—to *feel* is everything."

One evening in May he went out alone, according to his custom, seeking for poetical impressions; and his excited imagination looked for them in everything, in the soft and balmy air, in the veiled and mysterious light of the thin crescent moon, in the hedges covered with hawthorn flowers, in the victorious song of the nightingale, and feeling his soul alive to all these marvels, he exclaimed, "I am a poet!" without reflecting that the little cow-keeper, who came back barefoot to the farm, listened with delight to the same bird; that the miner stopped with his extinguished lamp in his hand to pluck a bunch of hawthorn for his wife; and that all human beings felt themselves overcome by something indefinite and divine, that first sensation of the spring which seems to swell their souls, and lift them up, and even to make their very

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bodies lighter, whilst yet none of these people fancied himself a poet merely because he could enjoy what was thus liberally given him.

When in the late evening all the lights were extinguished, and all noises hushed, and the air began to be cooler under the influence of the dew, Maurice remarked a soft light gleaming through the blades of grass at the foot of the hedge, and his first thought was, "Ah! it is going to be warm now; here's a glow-worm;" but he soon corrected this common-place thought, and replaced it by one of a more elevated order. Approaching the little creature, and putting it upon his hand with delicate care, he said to it, "You poor little glow-worm, your destiny resembles my own; your light shines for the indifferent and the ignorant, just as my genius does. You shine in solitude without admirers, and yet how much you surpass all that surrounds you in beauty! What is the earth-worm in comparison? I wonder if you are conscious of your superiority, and if you never aspire to see it recognized?" To Maurice's great astonishment, the glow-worm immediately

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answered, with a soft and persuasive voice, "All these thoughts are familiar to me, because I had them myself in my younger days. Yes, when I perceived the pretty blue light that I was able to shed, it filled my heart with pride. I amused myself with illuminating now the calyx of a flower, and now a tuft of grass; I changed the moss into emeralds and sapphires, and considered myself very superior to my sisters, the caterpillars, and my brothers, the earth-worms. One evening in particular, when I climbed (not without difficulty) the trunk of a tree, to see as far as I was able, I heard a silvery voice that cried, 'Oh, papa, the pretty glow-worm! See how it shines; I never saw anything so charming. Do take it for me!' It was a little girl who was walking with her father in the cool of the evening. Delighted to see my beauty appreciated at last, I permitted myself to be taken without difficulty, to be put upon a watch, and illuminated the dial so well that the little girl uttered cries of admiration, and wanted to take me away with her, but her father urged that this would be condemning me to certain death,

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for she would not know how to feed me. She renounced her project regretfully, saying that it was a great pity, and that everybody would have been astonished at my beauty. I was put back upon a leaf, and I remained awake the whole night comparing the praises that I had received from this child with the indifferent solitude that generally surrounded me. I was soon convinced that if my especial merits were known to a greater number, a great success awaited me, and I resolved to seek this appreciating public; had not the little girl declared that I was a marvel? But how was I to realize such an audacious scheme? I must go into a town, and the distance was immense for my little legs. I soon observed that the people who passed along the road stopped to look at a beautiful lilac that flowered at the angle of the road; then, as if it were impossible for them to resist the temptation, plucked a branch, and smelt its perfume as they walked along. As all these people went to the town, I boldly climbed the lilac, and hid myself in a bunch of flowers to be carried away. This is how it came to pass that

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I was carried off by a tall, strong lad, who sang all along the road, and stopped at last before a fine house, where he was immediately admitted. A tall gentleman came to speak to him, and I recognized with pleasure the father of the little girl who had so much admired me. I thought how glad I should be to stay in this house, where I knew that I was appreciated. . . . All happened just as I wished; the youth offered his branch of lilac to the little girl, and the very same evening she adorned her own room with it, in a beautiful crystal vase. Thinking the opportunity a good one, I immediately exhibited myself, and shone as brightly as I could. My light was soon observed, and the child called all the people of the house, who loudly expressed their delight. Only think how I congratulated myself upon my journey! And might not other successes await me? All went just as I wished, and I could not have planned any circumstances more favourable to my ambitious projects.

"The next day a great breakfast was given to the notabilities of the town, and the little

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girl decorated the drawing-room with a beautiful bouquet, in the midst of which she put the branch of lilac on which I was. After the breakfast the guests came into the drawing-room, and several of them came quite near to the bouquet to smell its perfume. My heart beat strongly; it was such an opportunity for me to win notice and distinction! All at once some one exclaimed, 'O, the nasty beast! look at this horrid caterpillar!' Everybody came and looked at me with disgust and repugnance; the little girl uttered cries of horror. 'But it is your beautiful glow-worm,' said her father; 'don't you know it again? Whilst it was in the dark its feeble light seemed charming to you, but now that you see it in the full light of the sun its little lantern is extinguished, and you perceive its ugliness. So it is with many ordinary minds, who fancy they are geniuses so long as they remain with their inferiors; but, put them amongst people of real ability, and all their weaknesses and defects will become immediately apparent. Throw this glow-worm out into the garden, and let him be satisfied

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with his own place in future: let him shine in the night. Those who have minor gifts may give pleasure if they remain modest, and without presumption.'

"This lesson sufficed for me," added the glow-worm, "and ever since I have been satisfied with shining in my own place."

"And so will I be!" answered Maurice, who accepted the glow-worm's moral as that of his own conscience.

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THE FRAGRANT DIAMOND.

THERE was in old time a king so good, so charitable, and so virtuous, that all his people loved and venerated him, and feared nothing so much as to see him die without an heir. It was hoped that if the king had a son, his virtues would be transmitted to his offspring; whereas, if he died without an heir, his nephew, Drako, would mount the throne, and everybody dreaded him on account of his notorious cruelty. It was said of him that he became more and more wilful and tyrannical because the courtiers, in order to please his father, who

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worshipped him, praised and admired his most evil actions, and by this base flattery they got fine estates and well-filled purses. As for the venturesome people who had the courage to blame his cruelty when he plucked little birds alive, or assembled poor children in the court-yard of the palace to have the pleasure of lashing out amongst them with a long whip when he rode through the little crowd on horseback—these venturesome people who dared to blame him soon disappeared either into wretched prisons or hopeless exile. So the subjects of the good King Mardocius were miserable at the mere idea of being one day governed by Drako.

The King had been already married for twenty years, but had no children; so there was great rejoicing in all the kingdom when one fine day in May they heard the thunder of a hundred and one guns, which proclaimed the birth of a royal child.

The bells rang, the cannons thundered, trumpets were blown, the people sang for joy; in a word, there were such merry noises all over the capital that nothing had ever been heard

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to compare to it. And many a year afterwards, when the grandfathers told the story of that day to their little children, they never omitted to declare that it had been the happiest day of their whole lives, the day when they had been merriest and gayest; for in the memory of man such a noise had never been heard, and all the good folks fancied they were deaf for twenty-four hours afterwards.

The people asked to name the prince, which the king very willingly granted, and this is how he came to be called Prince Welcome.

The only living creature in all the kingdom who was not glad at this glad time was Drako; and instead of rejoicing, he was only vexed because his new cousin would deprive him of the crown, which had always been the object of his most ardent desire, and he swore to neglect no means for taking his revenge; so that when all the people were rejoicing on account of Prince Welcome's birth, Drako thought of nothing but how to take away his life.

The baptismal festivals were splendid, and even the very poorest were happy on that day,

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for by the King's orders immense tables were spread out in all the streets. These tables were covered with meats, with pastry, and with all sorts of fruits. The richest wines of all the earth tinted the crystal cups with their different hues, till they seemed as if they were filled with liquid ruby or topaz, or pale transparent gold. Every one was admitted to the feast, and every one helped himself according to his own taste, forgetting for one day his toil, and pain, and misery. And this is what is really good in all such public rejoicings.

The capital city had offered by subscription a cradle to the new-born Prince. It was a marvellous piece of work in the form of a ship with sails. The body of the vessel was of pearl incrusted with gold, and the sails served as curtains woven out of glittering gossamer.

Every town had desired to send its present, for, as the proverb says, "Water always flows to the river," or otherwise, "Gifts always come to those who have no need." Only one malicious old fellow made answer, when his subscription was asked for, "He who gives to one

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richer than himself is an ass for his pains;" but this man was an oddity, who had an answer ready for everything.

The evening of the baptism arrived, and King Mardocius, wearied with joy and bustle, was preparing to go to bed, when somebody came to inform him that an old man with a long white beard had come to ask for an audience. The life of kings has its duties and its fatigues; and, in spite of the eager desire that the King felt to go and see the round and rosy face of Prince Welcome, lying snugly in his beautiful ship-cradle, and notwithstanding the want he felt for a little rest on his own account, after having received so many congratulations, and returned so many thanks, he commanded that the old man should be brought before him.

"Sire," said the stranger, after having prostrated himself before the King, "I ask as a favour to be heard by your Majesty alone."

Mardocius, who was brave, and had a clear conscience, made a gesture and sent away his guards. "Now, my father," said he, "I am listening to you."

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The room was now filled with a delicious, light, and penetrating perfume, which the King inhaled with an exquisite pleasure, and whose origin he sought in vain. This perfume was of a softness hitherto unknown; Mardocius did not remember to have ever breathed anything resembling it, no earthly flower exhaled it, and the warm breezes of evening had never brought to him anything so sweet. Mardocius awakened himself with difficulty from the strange influence of this incomparable odour to invite the old man to rest himself. But the old man remained standing, and said to the King, "Sire, you have governed your people with justice and kindness; you have devoted your days and nights to their service, sacrificed your pleasures, and nobly fulfilled your duties and your task. Filled with gratitude for the grandeur that you have given to my country in overcoming all her enemies, heartily admiring your virtues, I desire to offer to your son, to the Prince Welcome, a little baptismal gift."

The King, who, from the simple appearance of the stranger, did not suppose that he could

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have in his possession anything of much value, said to him with kindness, "The most humble present would become precious if accompanied by such words. But, my father, if you are the bearer of the delicious perfume that intoxicates me at this moment, I beg you to give it me, for if once it left me I should not cease to regret it and should always remember it. Later I would give it to my son, for so he might attach his subjects to his royal person."

"That is, indeed, the gift which I bring for the Prince," replied the old man, who with his feeble hands unrolled some object from the folds of his white garment. Between his slender fingers escaped gleams like the arrowy rays of sunshine between the bars of a prison, whilst sheaves of sparks and cascades of stars sprang from his trembling hands, which, a little lifted above a cushion, gently let fall an object whose splendid light and intense perfume immediately filled the hall.

"What can this marvel be?" cried the King, at the height of surprise and admiration.

"This is the Fragrant Diamond!" replied the

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stranger; "I am not permitted to give it away during my lifetime, but I have resolved to bequeath it to the Prince Welcome after my death."

"But this diamond is worth a kingdom!" exclaimed King Mardocius, all dazzled by its radiance. "How do you happen to have such a treasure in your possession?"

"If your majesty feels some surprise at the evident value of this diamond, what will you think of its *power?* The Fragrant Diamond is a talisman which instantly realizes the wishes of its possessor; and, since such a talisman may become just as dangerous as it is useful, according to the character of its owner, I have determined not to leave the future ownership of it to blind chance. It shall belong to the Prince Welcome, who will be educated by his illustrious father in ideas of justice and the practice of every virtue."

Mardocius, whilst fully appreciating the inestimable value of the precious stone, put no faith whatever in its magical properties, and believed that the old man was trying to deceive him in

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order to make him give an extravagant price, or else that he fancied these things, for being of a great age he might well be infirm in intellect. "If this diamond has such wonderful qualities," he said, "how does it happen, reverend father, that you do not make use of it to escape from death, which you believe to be so near, and which all men desire to avoid?" In putting this question, the King expected to embarrass the old man, but the latter quite calmly answered,—

"I do not desire to escape death, because I have asked for wisdom from my talisman, and wisdom has taught me to conform myself to the law that made me mortal. Since it is not good for man to dwell for ever in this world, I am ready to yield up my soul when the final hour shall come. I ought to tell you farther, O my king! that it is forbidden to give away, or even to lend, this talisman; it must be *taken* if its power is to be preserved. Whenever, therefore, I feel that mine hour is near, I shall give due notice to your majesty, and when once mine eyes are closed to the sun's light, the Prince

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must come and take with his own hand the talisman from off my breast. Let him then employ it for the protection of the weak and helpless, and for the triumph of justice!" Having pronounced these words, the old man wrapped himself in his white mantle and quitted the presence of the King, who desired in vain to retain him to give some proof of his gratitude. But what could he offer to a man who had the power of instantly realizing his wishes?

The wisdom of the stranger, and his noble simplicity, had strongly impressed Mardocius, and his mind was full of the most serious thoughts when he approached the cradle of Prince Welcome.

Meanwhile, what was Drako doing? With an envious eye he watched the presents that were brought to the palace for his infant cousin, and jealousy increased within his breast. When he saw the old man, and heard him ask for a secret audience, he suspected a mystery, and slipped furtively behind him to spy out what was going to happen. Hidden behind the heavy tapestry which hung before the door of the royal cabinet,

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he heard everything; and the fire of the diamond, which darted its sparks through the threads of the tapestry till they came even to Drako in his hiding-place, kindled all the evil passions within his breast. He resolved to get hold of the talisman. When the stranger left the room Drako hid himself in the shadow, and determined to follow and seize the talisman; but in going out of the palace he found himself suddenly enveloped in a thick yellow mist that concealed the old man completely, and prevented the accomplishment of his bad project. He tried indeed to follow him, guided by the perfume, but soon fell into one of the magnificent basins that decorated the court of honour, and he had time to swallow some mouthfuls of stagnant water before his cries brought the attendants to his assistance. Besides that, the attendants, who hated him for his wickedness, waited as long as possible before they fished him out again, and amused themselves by imitating his wretched plight behind his back; and whilst some of them pretended to be very sorry for what had happened, the others laughed

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amongst themselves, and rejoiced at his misadventure.

Prince Welcome, to whom his parents had given the best and healthiest nurse in the whole country, grew and strengthened very rapidly. He walked and talked very early, and it was a pleasure to see him struggle and get rid of the arms that held him, and run staggering, as babies do when they are not yet quite firm upon their legs, to carry alms to the poor who begged at the palace-gate. For at that palace there were no sentinels to keep the poor people at a distance. Mardocius had not one of those hearts that are too sensitive to be able to bear the sight of human misery, and he often went himself to open his purse to the needy, and cheer them with words of consolation.

And now began the education of Prince Welcome. He soon understood two things—that to apply himself diligently was the best way to please his father, and also, that a prince ought to be as superior in knowledge as in birth; so his progress was rapid and steady. He worked along with his cousin, the charming Princess

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Muguette, and his pride was to look as learned as possible in her eyes. When Muguette asked him a question it would have seemed shameful that another should be able to answer better than he could.

Muguette was born four years after Prince Welcome, and as she came into the world on the first of May, and during the night all the lilies of the valley burst into flower to perfume the road where the baptismal procession was to pass, they called her Muguette, because Muguet is the French for Lily of the Valley, and they all spoke French at court. Her father was the king of a neighbouring country, and he had been obliged to defend himself several times against Drako, who wanted to get possession of his kingdom, but had never been able to manage it.

When Muguette was fifteen years old, Drako began to take notice of the whiteness of her complexion, the brilliance and richness of her golden hair that floated around her like a wonderful veil, the ineffable sweetness of her look, of her voice, and of her smile. He calculated

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that, in addition to all these gifts, there would be the kingdom of her father; and so great was this last charm in Drako's eyes that he determined to ask her hand in marriage.

Muguette laughed at first, and amused herself like a child at this ridiculous proposition. In her eyes, Drako seemed to be an ugly old baboon, and the notion of his being in love seemed to her perfectly comical. In her childhood she had called him *Croquemitaine*, and this was the name that she always gave him when she talked about him with Prince Welcome. And then this little playful Muguette had no notion of putting on her pretty fair hair anything so heavy and burdensome as a crown. Prince Welcome used to say to her that the wild flowers they gathered together in the fields suited her a great deal better than precious stones, and Muguette believed everything that Prince Welcome said to her. The King, her father, represented that she exposed herself to the anger of the evil-minded prince; but she mimicked so cleverly before the court the hang-dog looks and ungraceful manners of Drako,

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that every one entreated her father not to think of so unsuitable a marriage for such a charming little princess.

There were, however, in those days, certain traitorous tongues, who took care to let Drako know that Muguette laughed at him and at the honour that he intended to confer upon her; so he went into a tremendous rage, and threatened to the princess that he would declare war against her father. At this, Muguette threw herself into the arms of Welcome, saying that he would defend her. All the court applauded, and the pair exchanged the ring of betrothal, and the great lords of the kingdom all offered their swords for the service of their future queen.

Whilst these things were happening, and just when every one was giving himself up with ardour to warlike preparations, an emissary came secretly to announce to the King that the old man of the talisman was dying, and that he requested the Prince to make haste. Prince Welcome set out at once, having first promised to Muguette to return without delay.

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Drako, on the other hand, learned through his spies the formidable preparations for war, and thought it hopeless to expect to obtain the Princess by force of arms. He resolved to go and consult a magician, whom he had often had recourse to in times of peril or difficulty. He waited for the moon to be hidden, and then, wrapping himself in a black cloak, he got upon a great horse and set off at a gallop for the forest. Having arrived at an opening where four roads met, he got down from horseback and struck the earth thirteen times with his sword. The ground immediately opened, and a tiny magician, with the face of an owl, pronounced these words in a thin voice:—

"Why do you knock so late at my door? You have awakened me."

"I want you to give me the means of killing Prince Welcome and marrying Muguette."

"Oh! oh! that's it, is it?" grumbled the little magician; "but it will be difficult to manage."

"But not impossible. You can procure it for me."

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"My power is not equal to that of Prince Welcome. He now possesses the talisman of talismans, the Fragrant Diamond."

"He has got hold of it!" exclaimed Drako, in a rage; "but I will not have him marry Muguette, I will not suffer him to reign!"

"Listen to me, then," replied the magician, after a short silence; "we must proceed by *ruse*, and pit our skill against his power. Let us first prevent him from making use of his talisman, after that you must endeavour to obtain possession of it."

"Oh, he'll be sure to keep it very carefully," answered Drako, out of humour.

"Very well; as I said to you, he must be prevented from making use of it. I shall transform Welcome into a beast, which, being without speech, will be unable to utter any command to the talisman. It will consequently become utterly useless to him; and if you only mind what you are about you will be able to get hold of it, marry the Princess, and become master of the whole world! Into what species of animal

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must I change Prince Welcome?" inquired the magician, "into a bird?"

"Oh, no! for he would carry away the diamond into boundless space, and it would be impossible for me to follow him."

"Into a fish?"

"Oh, no! for he would carry the diamond into the depths of the infinite ocean, and it would be impossible for me to follow him."

"Shall I turn him into a wild beast of the jungle—into a lion—tiger—hyæna?"

"No! no! no! for he would have *strength*, and I could not tear the talisman out of his clutches. I must have him easy to follow, feeble, timid, hideous, repulsive—he who has humiliated me by his strength, by his bravery, and by his beauty."

"Choose for thyself, then, and name to me that animal which is so unfortunate as to be poorly enough endowed by nature for such a purpose as thine."

"Let him be a HEDGEHOG!" exclaimed at last this evil-minded Prince, after having sought during a long pause. "I cannot suppose

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that under such a shape he would charm the eyes of Muguette."

"Thy wish is already accomplished!" the magician answered instantly, with an ironical voice, and immediately vanished.

Drako leaped upon his horse, and thought of nothing but finding his unfortunate cousin under the form of a hedgehog. He urged his horse with voice and spur, and the horse galloped. This was not enough for his impatience, and he lashed the noble animal with his long whip until he leaped and bounded. "Faster! faster!" and the cruel spur buried itself in his bleeding sides, which were shaking with the last spasms of his agony. The horse stopped short, trembling in every limb, arching his back, foaming at the mouth. The golden ball of the whip came heavily down between his ears—a useless cruelty, for he fell with the death-rattle in his throat before the gate of the royal palace, dragging with him his ferocious rider in his fall.

The guards made haste to raise Drako, and to carry him to the palace. In spite of his

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sufferings, he immediately inquired what news there were of his cousin, and he was informed that at the court of King Mardocius they began to be disquieted on account of his prolonged absence. Drako reflected that Prince Welcome would never be able to make himself recognized under his new shape, but that he would continually try to get back to his father's palace. He immediately declared war against Mardocius, and gave orders that his army should march against him without delay.

Having formerly heard the conversation between his uncle and the mysterious old man, he knew that the diamond gave out a singular perfume, and counted upon this perfume to find out Prince Welcome. It was impossible to forget that delicious and unique odour that he had breathed when hidden behind the tapestry, like the treacherous spy that he was.

Drako put himself, then, at the head of his troops, and attacked his uncle's territory. The inhabitants fled in fear at his approach, aban-

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doning everything that they possessed. As for him, he advanced rapidly towards the capital, for Mardocius, having no wish to declare war against his neighbours, did not keep up any regular army, and employed some time in preparing one and making it ready for active service; he waited, too, very anxiously for his son, Prince Welcome, in order to give him the command, for he felt himself too old and weak to support the fatigues of a campaign.

But the days passed without any news of the Prince, and Muguette would not come down from the lofty tower where she watched for his arrival, and her nights were passed in nothing but prayer and weeping. Emissaries had been dispatched in all directions, but they learned nothing except that the Prince, after having watched by the old man during his last moments, had left his lodging at nightfall. From that moment all trace of him had been entirely lost.

Meanwhile, Drako had come to within a few leagues of the capital, and Mardocius, old and feeble as he was, went to try what he could do

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to prevent him from advancing farther. But what can courage do against force and numbers? The King fought bravely from the rising to the setting of the sun, and when the last of his defenders abandoned him he still fought on, surrounded by the dead, and refused to yield up his sword. "Perish, then!" cried Drako, as he struck the old King down. "Thou shalt live accursed!" said Mardocius, with his dying breath, "thou who has shed the blood of thine own family!" Drako turned pale for an instant, when his soldiers themselves started back from him in horror; but he shouted to them, "Forward! to the pillage!" and soon he entered as a conqueror into the capital.

Muguette had watched all the battle from the top of her tower, and when she saw her uncle fall, and the cruel Drako advance towards the palace, she gave a great cry, and, dreading to fall into the hands of that cruel Prince, she wrapped herself in a dark mantle, and fled through the gardens, not knowing where to go. "Ah, my dear Prince Welcome!" she ex-

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claimed, weeping, "why are you not here to defend me, to hide me from the eyes of this monster?" Then she heard a loud clamour, and her own name pronounced amidst fierce cries. It was the soldiers of Drako, who were taking possession of the palace; and their chief gave orders to stop all the outlets, so that he might get possession of the Princess. Trembling with fear, poor Muguette sat down at the foot of a tree, not daring to stir for fear of being discovered.

Night fell, and soldiers were running hither and thither about the gardens with flaming torches. Some of them passed quite close to her, and she was ready to faint when she saw them.

Just then she began to feel herself surrounded by a strange perfume, and she wondered from which of the plants it came, when it seemed to her that she saw the mosses moving close to her feet. She watched attentively, and soon saw a strange animal come out of the moss, where it had been hidden. Till that moment she had not perceived it, because it was all rolled

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together in a lump. As the creature walked slowly towards her she perceived that it was a hedgehog. Far from being afraid of it, as a silly and ignorant Princess would have been, Muguette remembered having read that these animals are clever at hiding themselves in impenetrable places; so she determined to follow this one, in the hope of hiding herself more effectually.

In order not to alarm her little guide, she got up very carefully, but what was her astonishment when she saw the animal come towards her and pull the hem of her gown, as if to invite her to follow it! "This poor beast is frightened by the noise of the soldiers!" thought the Princess, "and it is asking me to protect it. Well, my poor hedgehog," said she, "since you and I are both trying to hide ourselves, we will hide ourselves together! So go first, and show me the way!" The hedgehog immediately trotted along the most sequestered and shady paths; he turned round from time to time to see if the Princess still followed him. At last he arrived at the end

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of the park, in a grove so thick that Muguette at first feared she would not be able to enter it. After many efforts, she succeeded in opening a passage through the closely-woven branches, and perceived the hedgehog scratching between the stones. She sat down on the ground for weariness, and watched the animal at work. Very soon, by the help of the moonlight, she saw that the hedgehog had made a hole, and through this hole she discovered the interior of a little moss-carpeted grotto, that nobody could ever have suspected. She stooped down to get into it, and was followed by the hedgehog, who came to lie down in a little snug place close to her. Muguette would have liked to caress the poor beast, to thank it for having shown her this refuge, but she dared not do so for fear of the terrible prickles that covered it all over; soon, however, she perceived that she had nothing to fear from them, for when she held out her hand, the hedgehog laid down his prickles over each other till they were as like smooth hair as possible. "Poor creature!" said the

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Princess, passing her soft hand over this rude covering; "who would have believed thee to be gifted with so much intelligence? If I were mistress here, no one should ever hunt thee, or plague thee, or disturb thy peace in any way!" It seemed to Muguette, that the animal trembled with pleasure under her caresses.

As soon as she was well established in the grotto, and after having concealed the entrance with moss and branches, she perceived once more the perfume that she had breathed under the trees of the park, and became convinced that it came from the hedgehog, for the nearer he approached to her, the stronger did the odour become. "I had never heard," she thought, "that there were perfumed hedgehogs, but there are so many things that I am ignorant of."

The night became quite dark, and Muguette, who would not give way to despair, thought that she would do well to try to get to sleep, so as to regain her strength, and try to escape the next day. She lay down upon the moss, but

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was much astonished to observe that the walls of the grotto remained visible in spite of the complete obscurity outside; she perceived a little gleam of light that seemed to escape from between the paws of the hedgehog, and which became stronger or feebler as the animal stretched itself out, or drew its limbs nearer together; the light ceased altogether when the hedgehog gathered itself into a ball to go to sleep. Muguette had not time to reflect much about this phenomenon, for, overcome by the emotions and fatigues of the day, she no longer knew whether she was awake or dreaming. Soon she closed her eyes, and fell fast asleep.

When she awoke the next day, the sun was already high above the horizon, and the poor Princess began to feel extremely hungry. She, who until then had been so well served—for the ladies of the court disputed amongst themselves which should offer her breakfast upon a golden tray—now awoke without having dined the evening before, and without the least hope of anything to eat for the day that was just beginning. She

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saw the hedgehog, who watched her with a sad look, as if in pity for her trouble. "Alas!" she said, "my poor little friend, am I reduced to die of hunger, or else to give myself up to that cruel Prince?" The hedgehog seized her by the dress, and drew her towards the opening of the grotto. "You want me to go out?" she asked; "but where am I to go?" However, she followed, but very carefully, so as not to attract the attention of her enemies, and soon found herself in the orchard. The hedgehog then began to run about a strawberry-bed, so as to show the great red strawberries to the Princess. "Ah! I understand, my faithful friend, that is to be my breakfast!" she said, and gathered strawberries, pears, and apples of kinds that ripen late, for it was autumn, and the season was far advanced.

But Muguette reflected that fruits were not a very substantial sort of food, and that she could not live in this way very long, so she went back with a sad heart to the grotto.

At the beginning of the night she saw with surprise that the hedgehog went to the opening

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of the grotto without dragging her by her dress according to his custom when he wished her to go out with him. So she let him go away by himself, thinking that he desired it, and awaited his return with much impatience.

After a time, which seemed wearily long to the Princess, the hedgehog returned, but his appearance was so strange, that Muguette could not at first understand what had happened to him; his prickles were all standing up to prevent some great balls from rolling off his back, and when he came near, she was amazed to see that he was bringing her potatoes; his paws and snout were full of earth that he had scratched to dig up this precious food. "O, my helper!" cried Muguette, "how can I ever return what you do for me?" She went to light some twigs of dead wood at a heap of leaves and branches that the gardeners had left to burn, and in this way she managed to roast her potatoes as the shepherds do, who guard their flocks in the pastures.

The Princess lived in this manner for a whole week, but what was her anxiety when one day

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she perceived a number of men occupied in digging up her precious potatoes! In the evening they loaded carts with them and took them away, thus destroying her last resource.

Meanwhile Drako had been very much disappointed to find neither Muguette nor her cousin the hedgehog, and he soon concluded that, wherever they were, it was most likely that they would be together. Edicts were published by his command, promising a splendid reward to him who should discover the Princess's hiding-place, and commanded, on pain of death, that all hedgehogs found within the country should be brought to him without delay.

Whilst these things were happening, the Princess's own dear hedgehog, being obliged to risk himself at a distance from the grotto, to find the means of subsistence, was caught sight of by one of the guards, who immediately called out to his comrades, "A hedgehog! a hedgehog! stop him! stop him!" The animal, finding himself pursued, fled as quickly as his little legs permitted, but the men hunted him terribly.

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He went in the direction of the grotto, hoping to hide himself in a crevice of the rocks, but the guards gained upon him rapidly, and one of them threw his pike, which caught the hedgehog in the belly; and this cruel man shouted when he saw the blood flow, "I have him! He is wounded, he is wounded!"

The Princess heard these cries, and fearing that her hedgehog was in danger, wished to save its life at any cost, so she came out of her retreat. When the guards saw her, they soon forgot their victim for a richer prey. They at once surrounded her, and told her that she was their prisoner, and that they should immediately take her before their master, Drako. The hedgehog took advantage of this opportunity to drag himself into a little nook of safety.

The guards uttered loud hurrahs, and sounded their horns, till they had no breath left. These noises came to Drako, who wondered what could be the cause. When he learned that they had captured the Princess, he was so delighted that he threw handfuls of gold to his guards, and opened a pipe of wine for

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them, of which they drank and drank till they became like so many dead men, and lay about helplessly here and there in the courtyard of the palace.

Muguette had a sad heart, and the tears were ready to flow, but her pride prevented her from shedding any in the presence of her enemy; she remembered that she was of royal blood, and was bound to keep up her dignity. "What, fair Princess?" said Drako, with an affected softness in his manner, "is this the way that you treat me, *me*, your most faithful slave! You go and hide yourself in a wretched grotto, when I should be only too happy to put my palace at your disposal. Permit me, O Princess, brighter than the day, to give orders that every one here shall obey you, and honour you as the Prince's betrothed!"

"Indeed I am the Prince's betrothed," Muguette answered, proudly; "and I thank you, my lord, for having given me the title. I have no doubt that the Prince Welcome, at his return, will be grateful to you for this courtesy!"

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"Welcome!" cried Drako, in anger, soon throwing aside his polite manner as a disguise that bothered him; "are you dreaming of that fellow yet, a sneak that made himself scarce when the hour of danger came, and abandoned you to your fate? Ah, Princess! forget him quickly, and bestow your hand on a warrior more worthy of it."

Muguette's cheeks burned with indignation. "Sneaks and cowards," she valiantly replied, "are those who accuse the absent, and if my well-beloved Prince Welcome is not here to defend his kingdom and his betrothed, it must be because he is detained elsewhere by some misfortune, or by some sorcerer's spell that his will is powerless to resist. As there is nobody in the world who is worthier of my hand, I shall keep it for him faithfully till I die."

"Princess!" resumed the cunning Drako, thinking of another subterfuge, and without pity for the pain that he was going to cause her, provided only that it advanced his own interests; "cease to indulge in an idle hope! Hitherto I have been anxious to spare your

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tears, and prepare you for sorrowful tidings, but the truth must be told at last. Prince Welcome lives no longer!"

"Alas! alas!" cried Muguette, forgetting her dignity in the sudden pain of this new pang, and bursting forth in sobs. "Who could have believed, O my well-beloved, that the course of our destiny would be interrupted so prematurely! O, the best, the wisest, the dearest of all the Princes in the world!" She hid her face in both hands, and a stream of tears ran trickling between her fingers. Instead of being touched by her grief, Drako was only irritated by it, and his jealousy went on increasing. "It's of no use crying like that," he said, rudely, to the Princess; "and I will not have a queen with red eyes and a wretched countenance. Be prepared, madam, to obey me, for at all events I am your conqueror and your master. You ought to be proud of the honour that I deign to confer upon you, and to receive it with gratitude and gladness."

"My lord," replied Muguette, in the midst of her tears, "there can never be any more glad-

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ness for me in this world, since my Prince has been taken away from me. I shall retire into solitude to live alone with his sweet memory."

"No, madam, a thousand times no!" burst out Drako, carried away by his fury, and striking the earth with his iron-armoured foot, "you shall remain a prisoner here till you learn submission; I shall soon find the means of reducing you to obedience. Henceforth you are forbidden to go beyond the walls of this palace!" He slammed the door behind him with such violence that the precious pieces of porcelain which decorated the room fell to the ground, and were all shattered to pieces. "Oh!" thought Muguette, "it would be better to die than to marry such a ruffian as that. Let him kill me whenever he will!"

From that day there began for the Princess a very sad existence indeed. She was served respectfully, but always in perfect silence; and although she had liberty to walk in the gardens, so soon as ever she came near the outer walls the guards menaced her with their spears. It was not out of kindness that Drako allowed her the use of the royal gardens, but he had

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learned from his guards that the capture of the Princess was due to the presence of a hedgehog; and, after punishing them with the cat-o'-nine-tails for having let it escape, he ordered them to look closely after Muguette and to give him notice if the hedgehog came near to her again. He reflected that Prince Welcome would do all he could to come near the Princess, about whose fate he must be extremely anxious.

Muguette, in spite of her grief, had not at all forgotten the poor animal which had shown her so much affection, and had sacrificed itself for her. The thought that it was suffering pained her still more; but, well knowing Drako's cruelty, she would not expose the hedgehog to it in seeking for the animal openly. So she got up when everybody in the palace was asleep, and walked about in the same paths that she had followed with the hedgehog on their way to the grotto; then she imitated the song of the cicada, not doubting that the hedgehog would recognize her voice. In this manner she sought during several nights, and began to fear that he had died of his wounds, when the breeze, suddenly

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rising, brought to her a vague and light perfume that she immediately remembered. She walked in the direction of the wind, and as the perfume became more intense her hope began to increase, and she went on walking in the same direction, still singing the song of the cicada.

All at once she heard a noise in a grove of trees quite close to the palace, and, stopping short in her walk, she saw the hedgehog running up to her.

"Ah, my friend!" she said, in her sweet and sad voice, "how happy I am to see you again, and especially not to have been the cause of your death!" Then she sat down on the ground and took the little creature on her knees, whilst she wept. "Thou art my only confidant," she went on, "alas! why canst thou not speak? perhaps thou couldst tell me the truth about my beloved Prince. Drako is false and perfidious, and I have no faith in his words, but he assures me that my Prince Welcome is dead." At these words her tears flowed more abundantly than ever, but she observed an extraordinary excitement in the hedgehog; he set up and laid down

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his prickles with great rapidity, and this was evidently caused by a deep emotion. Muguette thought that he must have understood her, and perhaps knew something that he wanted to communicate to her. "Do you know anything about Prince Welcome?" she asked, with a beating heart.

The hedgehog made all his prickles lie quite flat along his back.

"Does that mean yes?"

He repeated the same movement.

"Is he alive?"

The animal lowered his prickles and lifted them briskly again, as if to take away all doubt from the mind of the Princess.

"Ah!" she said, "what happiness! now we can talk together." Then, wishing to make sure that she was not mistaken, and that the hedgehog understood her perfectly, she renewed the question under another form.

"So my beloved Prince is not dead?"

The prickles all jumped up with a noise. It was the hedgehog's *no*, and a very decided *no* it was too.

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MUGUETTE AND THE HEDGEHOG.

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"I suspected as much," she continued, "it is a lie of that dishonourable man to make me yield to his wishes, but if you know my well-beloved, and if you are able to meet him, try to assure him that my love is as warm as ever it was, and that I shall be faithful to my latest breath."

The day had already dawned when Muguette made up her mind to leave the hedgehog. It was not easy for her to regain her apartment without being perceived, nevertheless, she had promised before her departure to come every night and pass several hours with her strange little friend.

Never suspecting that she was followed and watched, she kept her promise faithfully, and very soon Drako was informed of all that was going on. He then played the spy in his own person, and when he saw Muguette seated near the hedgehog, he recognized the wonderful odour and knew from that instant that it was Prince Welcome, and that the talisman was still in his possession. He gave his orders in a low voice, and advanced like a wolf towards the hedgehog, which he hoped to seize by surprise;

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but at the instant when his eager hands grasped the animal, it rolled itself into a ball and stuck out its prickles in every direction, which buried themselves so deeply in the hands of its enemy that he was forced to let go with a roar of pain. "Shoot it, shoot it!" he cried aloud to his guards, but the hedgehog had disappeared. "Oh! that's the way he thinks to escape me!" he added, in anger, "very well! he's mistaken. And as for you, madam," he said to the Princess, "you shall be shut up in the donjon tower, and you shall only come out one hour in the day in the servants' courtyard, and I will have you well guarded all the time! I give you a fortnight's delay to submit yourself, and if after that you persist in your obstinacy, I shall order you to be put to death!"

Poor Muguette now saw clearly that she was utterly lost if her poor Prince Welcome did not find the means of helping her. They made her mount and mount to the very top of the tower, and once there she was shut up in a cell like a criminal. She heard from her prison a great noise of bells and trumpets, and

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criers who, by Drako's command, ordered all the inhabitants of the town to bring to the palace as many stones as they could carry. The folks were so terribly afraid of the new tyrant, that they immediately set about executing his behests, and although it was but just daylight, the Princess saw them arriving in long processions, men, women, and children all laden with stones which they were compelled to lay down so as to build a circular wall round the place where the hedgehog lay concealed. The guards made a living hedge all round, armed to the teeth, and they stood so close together, and watched so well, that it was impossible for any creature bigger than a mouse to find its way between their legs. Drako had promised a thousand golden crowns to him who should catch the hedgehog. They were ordered to take it alive, but not to kill it, for fear that the talisman might be discovered.

From the loophole of her cell Muguette saw the wall growing and rising as if by miracle. All the labours of the city and of the fields were suspended, all business was at

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a standstill, and the builders were scarcely permitted even to eat hastily a morsel of food during the whole day, and the sick and dying were left alone in the houses without help.

When the wall had reached such a height that Drako thought it quite impassable for any hedgehog, the trees were cut down for a breadth of twelve yards and the grass was mown. Then they began to build a second wall within the circle of the first, and Muguette saw quite well that Drako's plan was to make the space narrower and narrower till the hedgehog would have no space for concealment, and fall necessarily into the hands of its foes. "If I could but escape," she thought, "I would endeavour to find Prince Welcome, and he would come to deliver my hedgehog and punish this cruel tyrant!"

Two guards came every day to fetch her for her daily walk, and whilst she was walking in the courtyard they carefully watched the entrance. From the first day she had noticed heaps of flax which were drying all along the bottom of the walls, and which were to

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occupy the servants of the palace during the winter evenings. The men separated it, and the women spun it, to make a provision of linen. Muguette immediately conceived the idea of using this for her own deliverance. Walking along the walls, she took the stalks of flax, broke them, and quickly detached the thread, which she hid as fast as she could. Perceiving that the guards were observing her, she pretended to play thoughtlessly with the pieces that she held, and began her work again as soon as she was no longer watched, whilst she seized the favourable moment to throw skilfully over the wall the stalks that she had done with, and which might easily have betrayed her. Having returned to her cell in the tower, she put the threads together, and twisted them to make a rope which might bear her weight. But the rope went on very slowly, and in a fortnight Drako had determined to condemn her to death.

As soon as the second wall was built, the men began to cut the trees in the inner circle, and to mow the grass, and they set to work to

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build a third wall within the others. A week only had passed since the beginning of the first wall, and the Princess calculated that in four days more the space left to the poor hedgehog would no longer be sufficient to conceal him from the eyes of his enemies, and leave him any chance of finding his own food. She therefore doubled her efforts in her work, but every day her heart was sadder and sadder as the enclosure visibly diminished.

On the tenth day they began the fourth enclosure, and on the twelfth a great clamour announced that the fifth and last circle was completed, and that the workers were set at liberty. Muguette watched with tears in her eyes the few square feet of space that were left to the hedgehog, and understood that Drako intended to make it perish of hunger. She heard him give orders to put a ladder against the innermost wall, so that he might witness its last agony, for the greatest care had been taken not to leave a door nor any opening, so as to be quite sure that the hedgehog would never escape; and Drako, warrior as he was, felt con-

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siderably afraid of the hedgehog since it had pricked him so in the hands.

On the evening of the fourteenth day, the evil-minded Prince came to know what Muguette had decided ; she replied that her resolution was not shaken, and that she would rather die than break the promise she had given to Prince Welcome.

"Be ready, then, to die to-morrow at the first hour of the morning," replied the cruel Drako, "at the same time with your hedgehog, who has but a few hours to live, for he has eaten nothing for three days past." Then, as he perceived that she was weeping, he thought to take vengeance of all her disdain by inflicting upon her a greater grief than any, and he added, "Oh, yes! weep as much as you like, my pretty one ; you have no notion yet how much reason you have for weeping. That ugly hedgehog which is going to die is your handsome cousin, Prince Welcome—it is your dear betrothed whom I have changed in this way."

"O, alas! can this be true?" cried the unhappy Princess, who immediately became unconscious, and fell down upon the floor of her dungeon.

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When she came to herself, Drako had quitted her, and all was darkness. She roused herself with all her energy, and resolved to attempt her escape that very night.

She drew her cord from under the bed, where she kept it concealed, and tried to measure the height of the tower. Fortunately for her, the window was not barred, for Drako had not suspected that she could have courage enough to attempt an escape in that way. Alas! the cord did not reach the ground, a whole story was wanting, but Muguette hoped to be able to reach the balconies of the windows placed beneath her own, and from thence to leap, if it were necessary, at the peril of her life.

Having firmly fixed her cord to the window, she allowed herself to slip quietly to the end, where she held by the large knot which was to stop her, and so arrived at the balcony of the first story, but she observed with vexation that the depth she had still to descend was such that she could not leap it without killing herself. After seeking on all sides, she dis-

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covered at last, in spite of the darkness, a tree that grew under the balcony, and whose branches reached one of the sides of the balustrade ; she sought out the strongest and put her foot upon it, still clinging to the balcony with one hand. The branch bore her, and so she made her way down to the trunk, and then let herself slide to the ground beneath.

Once on the firm ground, she could hardly believe in her own success; but she had no time to lose in reflections, the day was about to dawn, and it was necessary to help Prince Welcome. She ran to Drako's ladder, and managed by its help to get over the wall ; then, having placed it on the other side, she went down into the enclosure, where she saw by the first pale gleams of dawn the hedgehog rolled in a ball, motionless. She ran towards him, with tears in her eyes, and said in a low voice, " O, my beloved Prince, come back to life ! It is your Muguette who comes to help you. Courage ! see, here are fruits to give you strength again ! Be quick ! I have come to save you from the cruel Drako ! " But what was her grief when he opened his eyes

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and she saw that they were already dulled with the approach of death! She feared that all was over, that she came too late, and a great despair took possession of her. "Alas!" she resumed, "must I lose you for ever, now that I have found you again? Is there no means of saving you?"

The Princess then saw that the hedgehog stretched himself out, spread his little legs, and turned over on his side. She thought with misery of the last convulsions of a death-agony, and her sobs redoubled. But whilst her eyes remained fixed on the dying animal, a ripple of light ran down to her feet and dazzled her eyes; she stooped down, and picked up the talisman, exclaiming, "Ah! I understand now why Drako has persecuted you like that, it was to get possession of this diamond, of this inestimable treasure!"

The Princess, who did not know the virtue of the talisman, had taken it between her fingers, considering it only as a jewel of immense value. All at once she shuddered, listened attentively, and began to tremble in

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all her limbs; she had recognized the voice of Drako, who was coming with his guards. One minute more and she was lost; the hedgehog's eyes were closed, he stirred no longer, and Drako cried, from the other side of the wall, "Who has dared to touch my ladder? Whoever it is he shall die under the lash! Bring me your shoulders," he called out to his guards, "and make a living ladder for me, I will not wait a moment longer!" And just as Drako was getting upon the shoulders of his guards, the Princess said to the talisman, "What is the use of thee, miserable stone? what is the use to me of all thy wealth? *I desire but one thing in the world, and that is to give back to Prince Welcome his human form and life!*"

Hardly had she said these words when Prince Welcome threw himself at her feet, and covered her hands with kisses, whilst he cried out, "At last, at last! my dearest Muguette, you have undone the evil spell, and we shall be happy together for ever, for ever!"

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The Princess raised him, and threw herself upon his breast, which she wetted with tears of gladness. As for him, he held her closely, and covered with kisses her beautiful golden hair. This was the spectacle that struck the eyes of Drako when he got to the top of the wall, expecting to find the hedgehog dead. He was seized with such a violent fit of rage that he fell backwards on the spears of his own guards, and killed himself.

"My darling!" said Prince Welcome to Muguette, "we have nothing more to be afraid of, so calm yourself!" and he explained to her the power of the talisman, which he had been unable to use so long as he was deprived of speech.

When the inhabitants of the palace saw the Prince and Princess coming towards them, and learned at the same time the death of Drako, they threw themselves on their knees. The good news soon spread through town and country, and every one was delighted to be rid of the dead tyrant.

The wedding of Muguette and Prince Wel-

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come was celebrated with great splendour, and all the neighbouring Kings came to do them homage.

Never was there a reign so glorious, nor so happy a land as theirs. If the meadows wanted water, soon the grass became green and thick under abundant showers. On the contrary, if the sun were needed to gild the wheat and swell the grapes, the splendid rays shone clear in a cloudless sky. When the time for ripening came, light and transparent vapours veiled the intensity of the light, and the fruits became so rich and ripe that they had the sweetness of honey.

In this fortunate kingdom, where misery and tyranny were alike unknown, men lived content and kind. They received, without jealousy, all who came from less happy countries, and saw them become better as they became more prosperous.

Welcome and Muguette lived beloved and honoured by their subjects; they had many children, and made a vow never to use the

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Fragrant Diamond but for the good of their people. They kept their vow, and that incomparable country was ever afterwards called the Happy Land.

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THE

WONDERFUL PURSE.

IT was at the close of an autumn day when the labourers unyoked their beautiful white oxen to rest them after their hard work, and the moist earth smoked in the furrows, and the blue mist wreathed the sides of the hills.

The labourers talked together, resting upon their long goads, and as they talked they watched a beautiful carriage that came along the road. In the carriage lay a white and delicate little girl by the side of her father. She was so pretty and so delicate that the good peasants

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had never seen anything like her. "She is an angel!" said one of them. "Or else a ghost!" replied the other. "There is no blood under her skin, which is whiter than the snowdrop of the woods."

The little girl made a sign, and the carriage stopped. Then she wanted to get down, but she appeared so weak that her father took her lightly in his arms and laid her upon the grass. "Father," she said, opening wide her violet eyes, "what great cream-coloured oxen! I want to stroke their curly heads. How strong they are! Oh, father! shall I ever be strong too, when I am grown up?" And without awaiting the answer she tried to run, but she tottered immediately and fell. "Ah!" she exclaimed, sobbing, "I cannot!" Her father wiped away hastily a tear that had gathered in his eye, and raised her up to carry her towards the oxen. Her grief soon passed off; she took the long polished horns in her transparent hands, and shaking her brown tresses in the wind, she cried out boldly, "Hola, Blanchet!" as she had heard the peasants do, and whilst the ox obeyed her feeble voice with

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perfect docility, one would have taken the child for a little fairy.

"It's plain enough," said one of the peasants, "that the little lady is not afraid of beasts."

"Oh no, I love them all, and with all my heart," she replied. "How strong they are! Why am I not strong too?"

"You will become stronger, my little Mary, especially if you let yourself be properly taken care of," replied her father. He then told her that it was time to go back to the carriage, because the sun was setting, and the evening air would be too cool. She allowed herself to be led away and wrapt in furs, for she began to shiver. "O beautiful sun!" she exclaimed with regret, on seeing that it was going to disappear behind the hill, "I like thy heat even better than thy splendour."

The carriage was going to leave the place, and Mary, with anxious looks, watched a poor swallow that seemed overcome by fatigue, and did all in her power to carry food to her little ones. The poor mother had no doubt made many a journey already that day, to fill so many

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little beaks and satisfy so many little stomachs. She flew low, very low, and the strokes of her wings became jerky and rapid; still she had to cross the river, in the bank of which her nest was hollowed. Her courage, like Mary's, was above her strength; her wings failed all at once, and she fell down. The labourers saw where she fell, and ran to seize her with their rough, strong hands, whilst the little ones uttered such plaintive cries that Mary was sorry for them. "Give the swallow its liberty!" she called to the peasants; "I will buy it." Then she took her purse, in which were three little pieces of gold: "Throw them this purse, papa, you can throw it farther than I can."

Accustomed to gratify all the little girl's wishes, and fearing the effects of her excited sympathy for the bird, he threw the purse; and the swallow, now free, flew towards her young, whilst the little ones said in their language, "Mary has restored our mother to us; a deed of kindness is never lost."

But at the instant when the purse was flying through the air, it was caught by the last rays

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of a dazzling sun, which transformed each little coin into a luminous star; then, the sun having sunk behind the hill, the wintry night came on, and all was frozen.

Meanwhile the purse had caught in the branches of a tall fir-tree, and the pieces of gold shone and glittered like so many tiny suns. Soon the ice which had been formed so quickly melted gradually under their kindly heat; the little swallows, which had been near dying of cold, began to twitter; the fish played again upon the surface of the river, and the fields became green again. It was the spring-time, but a spring without a winter before it.

Meanwhile the swallow remained pensive and saddened, and her young ones, being anxious, asked her, "Mother, why don't you sing now? The suns of the marvellous purse warm us, they have brought back the insects for our food, they will make the corn ripen and the flowers bloom. We shall not have to undertake long and painful journeys, there will be no winter to be afraid of here." But the swallow thought of her benefactress, whom she had seen so pale and weak,

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and trembled for her life in thinking of the winter. How could a bird repay a benefactress who had bought her liberty, and allowed her to bring up her brood?

After having long reflected, whilst she smoothed her feathers, and made her little ones fly in the heat of the marvellous purse, she had the idea of taking under her wings a ray of the spring that gladdened her, and carrying it to Mary. After many and wise counsels to her little ones, which their inexperience needed, she set off. When she got to the town, where the influence of the marvellous purse was not felt, she would certainly have fallen down dead with cold without the ray of spring that she carried under her wing, and that warmed her.

As this was a swallow that had observed a great deal, she sought Mary in the richest houses, having seen from her toilet, her manners, and her pretty carriage, that she was one of the favourites of fortune. At all the windows where the swallow came to look for her, the people in the houses cried out immediately, "A swallow, a swallow! Come and see, a swallow! the winter

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is over!" but the old and the wise replied, with a shake of the head, "One swallow does not make a summer."

By dint of hard seeking, Mary was found at length, but, alas, in what a condition! She was lying on pillows, white like her own cheek, and trembling with fever. There was a bright blazing fire in the room, which was unable to warm her; the little table close to her bed was covered with bottles of different medicines, and the doctor said to her father, "She wants a ray of the spring to set her up again," and poor Mary coughed so that she did not hear the swallow which was tapping at the window-pane with her beak. At last she saw it, and with a cry of delight begged that the window might be opened. "How cold the poor swallow must be!" she said; "the snow is on the ground and on the roofs."

Once fairly inside, the swallow slipped the ray of spring under the sick maiden's curtains, and what a change it made! Mary shivered no more, the fever ceased, the cough stopped, the roses came back to her cheeks, and she called

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out in a transport of joy, "I am cured, father! I am cured!"

So long as the winter lasted the bird brought her benefactress rays of spring from the wonderful purse, and Mary gradually got strong. When the fine season returned in the order of nature, and for everybody, she wished to go back again to see the great oxen and the little nest. She could walk now, and the labourers told her of the prodigy, which procured them a continual spring; and as she knelt to return thanks for her health and strength, she clearly heard the little swallows, that had also become strong, twittering as they flew above her head. And they said to each other, in their own bird-language, "Mary gave back our mother to us; a deed of kindness is never lost."

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THE LAST FAIRIES.

A LEGEND.*

THERE existed long ago on the top of a steep hill a little hamlet that had got itself together there, nobody knew how or why; nobody could remember to have seen the place

* This little story differs from the others in the present volume by its origin. It is really a popular legend, which was found by the writer amongst the peasantry of the *Morvan*, a highland district in the east of France. The theological moral which it conveys is rather outside of the simple and genuine fairy tale, but the present narrator, though aware of this, has desired to remain faithful to the popular tradition, which is indeed perfectly blameless, and is quite seriously believed by the peasantry amongst whom the legend originated.

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without inhabitants, and the old people said that the cottages had grouped themselves little by little, and had ended by making something like a village; but as for knowing who had thatched the first roof, or who had been the first inhabitant, nobody had any information at all, nor could anybody tell what were the reasons for choosing such a situation. The hill had not a single tree for ornament or for shade, and was covered with a reddish vegetation, except some hollows which held rain-water like miniature cisterns, and where grew short, fresh-looking grass as green as emerald. This hill without spring or rivulet was called the Fairies' Rock, and the inhabitants believed themselves to be under the special protection of the White Lady, who lived in the grotto, and only came out of it to dance in the clear moonlight. According to the accounts of those who had seen her, this White Lady was marvellously beautiful, so beautiful that she must surely be the Queen of the Fairies!

At the foot of the hill spread a valley so freshly green, so full of fine shady trees, and traversed

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by so many babbling streamlets, that it seemed a little earthly paradise, and it was difficult to explain how, with such a temptation at their feet, the inhabitants of the Fairies' Rock did not come down immediately to live in so sweet a place. Yet the idea had never once struck them; and if they had been compelled to abandon their arid rock for the luxuriant valley, it would have been a bitter and painful sacrifice, and they would never have ceased to regret the charms and merits which nothing but their own intense affection could have discovered in their birthplace. Still they were very often obliged to come down into the valley to seek a supply of water, and in the summer it was very hard work to climb the shadeless slopes with the heavy water-vessels upon their heads. The laughter-loving maidens sang and danced, and ran after each other down the hill, balancing their empty pitchers, then wetted their flaxen hair and their arched feet in the cool water, all which was merry play; but their elders were waiting for the water upon the Rock, and they had to carry it up. Then there

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was an end to song and laughter; but in their stead was perspiration hastily wiped from the forehead, the hurried breathing of hard labour, and the short, silent pauses to get breath again and moisten parched lips at the pitcher.

There came a summer of tropical heat, and the journeys to the valley became so frequent that some remedy was sought for; but what could the remedy be? It was settled at last that the White Lady should be consulted, for she was called the Protectress of the Rock, and she had often helped the inhabitants in their difficulties. The people waited till the full moon, because they knew that the Fairy loved the moon, and then they went to the mouth of the grotto and presented their petition. They had not to wait for long. Hardly had the blue rays begun to penetrate the mysterious dwelling when the White Lady came out dancing. She was dressed in white gauze so light, so light, that the very cleverest spiders in the world were continually occupied in spinning the finest thread for its tissue; her belt was made of rainbow, and her hair was bound with a

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starry crown ; she was tall, and so marvellously beautiful that one could scarcely look her in the face. Her way of dancing had no jerking or jumping motion, she rather glided in the air in gentle curves and undulations, and her beautiful arms bent above her head with an infinite grace, whilst her crystalline voice sang words that only the fairies could understand. She was indeed the Queen of the Fairies, and she held in her right hand the wand of diamond that was the sceptre of her dominion.

The inhabitants of the Rock addressed her with much respect, and entreated her help that they might have water. "You shall have it," she answered, "for I am pleased with you. None of you has ever been so indiscreet as to penetrate into my dwelling, or to repeat my songs, and you leave in peace the bats which are my messengers. I shall ask the Fairy of the Water Plants, who is my friend, for some pure water, and I shall bring it up to the Rock with the help of the valley fairies, who are my vassals, and before this moon is extinguished a beautiful pool will reflect her image and bear

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witness to my power." Then she sang a call, and clouds of bats with eyes like red-hot coals, but smaller than beetles, surrounded her and awaited her commands. She dismissed the inhabitants of the Rock and sent her messengers in every direction, but her mission of friendship and confidence to the Fairy of the Water Plants was reserved for her private attendant, Cedonia, whose wings of thin gold leaf, powdered with dust of emerald, pierced the air with the rapidity of lightning, and whose usual resting-place was the inside of a rose in her mistress's beautiful hair.

The White Lady, being left alone for a moment, went on dancing and singing till her messengers came back. They very soon arrived, followed by the Fairies of the Valley, who came to put themselves under the orders of their sovereign. They were a charming troop. The wood-fairies had oaken crowns, or else aigrettes made of feathers, in which were mingled the blue of the jay, the green of the woodpecker, the burnished gold of the plover; some of them wore collars of eggs

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THE LAST FAIRIES.

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stolen from the nests, and resembling polished marbles, others had dresses made of moss, and belts of ivy. The fairies of wild lands had head-dresses of white or rose-coloured heather, those of cultivated fields had poppies and daisies; some of them had great green wings like those of the cicada, or stippled with red and blue like the wings of the grasshopper, but by far the prettiest were the butterfly wings, with all the variety of flowers. The water fairies were recognizable by their dresses of water-weed embroidered with scales, and their dragon-fly wings, and by the coolness of the atmosphere all around their persons, which streamed with liquid pearls from their dwelling-place. They placed themselves in order round the White Lady waiting for the Fairy of the Water Plants, who soon arrived in her chariot, made of a golden iris, and drawn by six kingfishers. She assured her friend that she could refuse her nothing, and begged her to accept the clearest of all her rivulets.

The labourers immediately set to work.

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The hares and rabbits in the valley were ordered to dig a bed for the rivulet, and they came in an innumerable multitude. With their claws they set to work scratching, and it was astonishing how fast they scratched. The birds brought all sorts of seeds, and sowed them along the sides, which were shortly covered with verdure and budding flowers; then the White Lady began to open the side of the Rock with her hard diamond wand, and she made such a crevice that the water could easily flow through it. All that remained to be done was to fetch the rivulet, but that depended upon the Fairy of the Water Plants, to whom it belonged. She called the wild ducks and widgeons, who are her strongest servants, and gave them a rope of rushes, which she told them to tie to the end of the rivulet to drag it into its new bed. They hastened to execute this order, and as the water came forward they saw the frogs leap from the sides with cries of delight. The widgeons, however, and the wild ducks could only bring the water to the foot of the hill, and to complete the work all the

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fairies were obliged to help them, except the White Lady and the Fairy of the Water Plants, whose rank forbade them every kind of work, and who had to command and see that their orders were properly executed. But the weight of this rivulet was considerable, and the fairies had to drag with all their united force to make it come along very slowly. However, in the soft moonlight, it might be seen climbing the Rock like a silver ribbon.

"What very hard work it is!" said the Fairy of the Water Plants, "yet I do my best, and employ all my power; cannot you, my dear friend, make this slope a little less steep, and not quite so difficult to climb?"

"No, I have done all I could in opening this crevice, but you see the water is coming on; it is now half way up the hill."

"Oh!" replied the Fairy of the Water Plants, "we shall succeed with the help of God."

"With or WITHOUT his help!" proudly replied the White Lady. But hardly had she uttered these impious words when the water

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suddenly stopped, and spread in a natural hollow in the hill, where it made a little basin.

The fairies all instantly vanished, and nobody has ever seen one since.

The basin to which the water had risen still exists, but, suddenly stopped in its course by the Fairy's words, the water remains half way up the hill-side, and the inhabitants of the Fairies' Rock, when they go there to fill their pitchers, teach their children that nothing is possible in this world without the help of God.

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THE TWO STORKS.

ONCE upon a time there were two little Princesses whose fate was pitiable indeed, for they were both orphans and prisoners. Their father, having been compelled to carry on a great war against his neighbour, King Marcus, had been conquered in battle, and had died wretchedly in captivity, leaving his two daughters, Irene and Abella, to the mercy of the conqueror, and the care of Queen Cunigonde his wife. Marcus was not a cruel man, and he had not treated them badly.

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He had desired that they might be the companions of his own daughter Lola, and had had them brought up and educated with her; but Cunigonde hated them because they were so amiable and so pretty that everybody exclaimed on seeing them, "O, what charming Princesses!" whereas she never heard anybody praise Lola except flatterers who were expecting a favour. However, Cunigonde concealed her aversion so as not to displease her husband, and from dread of his anger.

The elder of the two sisters, Irene, had a very gentle temper. She was a little sad, and not very quick, but every one loved her because she never contradicted anybody, never set up her own will or her own fancies, and always yielded to the opinion of others. Her hair and eyes were of a blue-black, like the wings of a raven, and her complexion was of a dazzling whiteness.

The younger sister was exactly the opposite. Lively, petulant, full of energy and resolution, with a rosy and healthy face, and a lithe, well-proportioned figure, so that the country people,

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who always think that the healthiest-looking girl is the prettiest, made a little jingling rhyme about her,—

Bright Abella
Is a belle, a
Princess fair
And debonair.

It was not much of a poem, but then you cannot expect country folks to be clever poets. The Princess sang delightfully, danced still better, and yet her studies lost nothing by all this, for she was spoken of as the best-taught Princess, the most sensible, and the most charming to be seen anywhere.

When Lola was old enough to be married, Princes came from all parts of the world to ask for her hand, for her fortune was immense, and as her parents had never had a son, she was to inherit the throne. But she was so ugly, and especially so spoiled and disagreeable, that she soon discouraged the most determined suitors. She said to some of them very proudly that they were not good enough to aspire to the honour of her hand, whilst she laughed openly

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at what she was pleased to consider ridiculous in others, thinking in this way to show her superior cleverness. She criticised by turns the costume, the manners and habits of foreign Princes, for she was too ignorant to be aware that there were other costumes and ways than what she had been accustomed to at her father's court. She was quite put out of temper with jealousy when she saw the Princes leave her as soon as they perceived Irene or Abella, who were nothing but maids of honour. She complained bitterly about it to the Queen, who tried to console her by saying that the Princes were people of comparatively little consequence and deplorably bad taste.

Very soon a rumour spread about the court that the greatest Prince in the whole world, the son of the First of Kings, was coming to pay his addresses to Lola; and indeed it was not very long before certain ambassadors, charged with magnificent presents, came to announce that the Prince Hassan was already on the way to solicit Lola's hand. Notwithstanding her prodigiously high opinion of herself, this vain

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Princess felt flattered by this embassy, for it was rumoured that Hassan was beautiful as the day, and his father the most powerful of all monarchs; but she resolved, nevertheless, to be very disdainful, fancying that in this way she would add to her own importance. Great preparations were made at the court of King Marcus to give a worthy reception to so great a Prince, and the King in person went forth to meet him at the frontier.

Hassan had often asked for the portrait of the Princess Lola, but always asked for it in vain; so you may fancy how much he wanted to see the lady herself. After the first interview he thought she was dreadfully ugly, and was cruelly disappointed; however, he tried to hope that her qualities and talents might turn out to be a compensation for the lack of beauty.

In the evening there was a concert and a ball, and the Prince, coming near to Lola, respectfully entreated her to sing. But she answered "No," quite sharply and sulkily. She had already observed that Hassan watched

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with increasing admiration every movement of Abella, and from that moment she used all her wits to keep her at a distance from the Prince, by constantly giving her fresh commands. Abella obeyed without the least ill-humour, and with a good grace that by no means escaped the Prince's observation.

"Do sing for us, my darling," Queen Cunigonde said at last to Lola; "you disappoint the Prince by your refusal."

"What does that signify?" she answered, shrugging her shoulders.

"But, dear daughter," said King Marcus, "if you will not sing, it must be because you are not in voice this evening. You must have taken cold."

"It is because I *will not*," she answered, turning her back upon His Majesty.

"Oh, that's it!" said the King, in anger, for he was very much vexed at her rudeness; and in order to divert the Prince's attention from an incident that was becoming unpleasant, and give him a compensation for Lola's refusal,—"the fact is, my daughter *cannot* sing; but

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Irene or Abella will sing for us instead of her."

Irene, who had been tired by the ceremonies of the day, had obtained permission to retire, and Abella was asked to sing. She gave no trouble by tiresome refusals, but began at once, and sang so easily and beautifully that the Prince was both surprised and delighted. During the dances which followed he invited her several times, thanked her for the pleasure she had given him, and assured her that after that his thoughts could not dwell an instant upon Lola, and that he desired nothing so much as to obtain her hand in marriage. But Abella answered that he knew very little about her, that he had come for another, and that his position compelled him to marry only a Princess of a rank equal to his own. She said all this with a tone at once so modest and so full of good sense that the Prince's admiration was only increased when he heard her speak, and he felt that he loved her quite in earnest. After some days he no longer pretended to seek after Lola, and made a decided offer to Abella, who

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answered that she was still very young to make an engagement, and that she feared, too, that the Prince might one day repent of what he was doing.

"Dear Abella," answered Hassan, "if you had any affection for me you would not reason so wisely, but I see that you have none."

"My lord," said the Princess, "I have been kindly treated here, and King Marcus has always interested himself in my behalf, so how is it possible that I should ever consent to become a source of grief and disappointment to him? Forget me, and marry Lola."

"I shall certainly never condemn myself to pass my life with that silly and disagreeable person, whatever may be her rank," cried Hassan; "and as for forgetting you now, dearest Abella, it is utterly impossible!"

The Princess quitted him with tears in her eyes, and Hassan saw very well that the fear of being ungrateful to King Marcus was the only impediment to an avowal of her sentiments. So much delicacy made her still more

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dear to him, and he vowed that he would never have any other wife.

Meanwhile Queen Cunigonde had not observed without mortal vexation how the Prince had altogether ceased to pay attention to her daughter, and had eyes only for Abella. She could not tell what to do, and decided at last, after much reflection, to go and consult Lola's godmother, who was a fairy, and would certainly not refuse her assistance. This she did, and the fairy recommended her to remove the two sisters, in the hope that the Prince would forget Abella when he saw her no longer. She offered to change Irene and Abella into birds for a space of time, in order that they might not interfere with the interests of her god-daughter. "They will recover their human shape," she added, "as soon as Lola is married."

Cunigonde accepted with many thanks. She entreated the fairy to change the Princesses into migratory birds, in order to spare herself the remorse that the sight of them might cause herself; for she was one of those people who

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do not at all like to be troubled with a sight of the evils which they have themselves created. The fairy accordingly promised that, in the course of that very evening, the two sisters should be changed into storks, the time of migration for the hot countries being now arrived, so that Irene and Abella would be compelled by the necessities of their new stork-nature to follow the other birds.

Now it happened that there was a grand hunt that day in honour of the Prince, and the ladies of the court were present in their very handsomest costumes, and all mounted on superb white horses, with shoes of solid silver. The weather was already cold for the time of the year; it was the beginning of October, and the forest was all covered with yellow leaves. The hunt was truly magnificent, and the peasants came from great distances to see it pass. Broad bridles of blue velvet lay upon the white necks of the horses, and martingales of the same upon their ample chests, and every martingale had a large sapphire just in the middle. The long habits of

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the ladies made the yellow dead leaves fly about above the ground as they passed like a whirlwind; the red casques of the cavaliers, who flashed by like arrows, the sounding of horns, and the barking of the dogs, made the scene so full of interest and attraction, that the hours passed by without being perceived, and twilight spread its mantle on the sky, when it was decided to return hastily to the palace, so as not to be surprised by night in the depths of the wild forest.

Hassan sought Abella amongst the cortége to ride close to her, and was already getting anxious because he could not find her amongst the ladies, when a great noise of wings attracted his attention. Every one reined his horse, and the King said, "This is the departure of the storks, winter is at hand!"

"Look at these two, how they lag behind the others!" observed a lady of honour; "they fly very low, and see! here is one altogether black."

"It's true!" observed another.

"Perhaps they are sick or wounded," said one

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lady, who had a very tender and compassionate heart.

"Or, perhaps, they are sorry to leave us," replied the Prince.

A piercing and plaintive cry from one of the storks sounded like an answer full of pain, but the cruel Cunigonde was the only person there who suspected that it was the last adieu of the Princess Abella, compelled to leave all the human friends who were dear to her.

When it became known at the court that Irene and Abella had disappeared, it was supposed that they had secretly gone back to the land of their birth; and the Prince, who was inconsolable, would no longer give so much as one look to Lola, who had become odious to him; and, in spite of all the artifices that were employed to detain him, he returned home to the King, his father.

The two Princesses on their part found themselves utterly exhausted, after having flown with the troop of the storks during the whole of a long day. When the birds stopped in the evening the two unhappy Princesses sought for a

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place apart from the rest, in order to talk together about their misfortune; for though they could now understand all languages, they could speak no language but that of the storks, on account of the shape of their bills. In this language, which is unintelligible to human beings, Irene made miserable lamentations. She wanted to reveal to the other storks that she was a king's daughter, and that she and her sister ought to be placed at the head of the troop to command it.

"At any rate," said she, "we should be able to rest when we required it by commanding a halt, and we might ourselves choose our resting-places, and fix the successive stages of our journey." But Abella, who was much wiser, represented to her sister that, far from having more respect for them, the real storks would be much more likely to suspect them of lying, and to laugh at them, or that, perhaps, their high birth might excite the jealousy of their companions and would not dispose them to kindness. "On the other hand," added she, "if all went just as we wanted, my dear Irene, we might,

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through our ignorance and inexperience, compromise the safety of the rest, and consequently our own at the same time. We neither know the road nor the resources of the different countries, so let us be content to submit to the direction of those who know better than ourselves, and let us try to learn something from them and to remember what we may learn."

But Irene became sadder and sadder, and would not apply her mind to anything that might have amused her. Abella, on the contrary, noticed the different countries that she passed through, and tried to attract her sister's attention to the changes in the vegetation, the costumes and aspect of the human inhabitants. On leaving the north, where she had always lived, and where the cold was beginning to be severe at the time of her departure, she had not expected to find farther on such mild and pleasant days, with the hedges of wild rose-trees in flower and pomegranates reddening. The storks, finding the weather so mild, stayed some time in the land of orange-trees, and Abella

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took the opportunity to make some charming excursions into the interior of towns, leaving Irene to seek the solitude of the woods, where she gave herself up to her grief without restraint. Yet Abella said to her, "I do beg you, dear sister, not to let yourself be discouraged in this way; we are victims of a piece of vengeance that cannot last for ever. Let us make good use of this time of trial in learning many things which we should otherwise have remained ignorant of all our lives, and when we recover our shape and our rank, we shall remember this long voyage with interest and pleasure. What numbers of things we shall have seen that we can talk about afterwards."

"Alas!" replied Irene, with her eyes bathed in tears, "how can I observe or learn anything when I have to find my own food and lodging? When I was a Princess, all these vile and degrading cares were taken off my hands by numbers of servants, and now I am forced to do all that for myself."

"Very well," answered Abella, "our misfortune will at least have taught us to manage

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for ourselves, and made us understand that a single creature ought to be able to get on without requiring the services of twenty others, for if every one had the same pretension how could the world live?"

But Irene neither troubled herself about the world nor about others, and her own personal misfortune seemed to her greater than all the calamities of the earth, because it was *she* who suffered. She had not energy enough to imitate her sister's courage, and so she became unjust, and in her heart accused Abella of injustice and indifference.

Very soon the winter announced its approach by violent winds, that shook the leaves from the trees and made all the flowers fade. The order of departure was given by the general of the storks, and the two sisters saw with an infinite terror the great sea that they had now to cross, and over which a moment's weakness would be death. Irene, deeply discouraged at the idea of the fatigues which she would have to undergo, declared that she would rather allow herself to perish of hunger than so to cast herself into the

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midst of all manner of perils. "Why should we resign ourselves to die in this way?" said Abella; "will you leave me without a companion, alone in the world? In making up our minds to go, we have at least a chance of arriving in life and health; and if the worst comes to the worst, it is not so terrible to face death as to wait for it." She said so much that at last she persuaded Irene to follow the storks, but all the way she heard nothing but complaints, lamentations, and fears without end; however, Abella was so good that, far from being irritated, she pitied Irene with all her heart, and did all in her power to help her. As soon as a ship was in sight she informed her sister of it, that she might rest a little on the tall mast, and have time to get her breath. In this way she contrived to make her go as far as the land of the Pyramids, of which Hassan had talked to her, but, once there, nothing could divert Irene from her melancholy nor awaken her from her torpor. She went aside into uninhabited places and remained whole days resting upon one leg, with her head thrown

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back, as if she wanted to see nothing of a country which was not her own. Observing that Irene often remained without eating anything, Abella went to hunt for her and brought her food, which she refused to touch, and in this way she became every day weaker and weaker.

At the end of a month she died, and poor Abella found herself quite alone. Her grief was so great that she could not endure the sight of the place where her sister had perished; but she reflected that other travels might, perhaps, afford some relief to her sorrow. What remained to her in the world? Her sister was dead, and Hassan was lost to her. One day, however, she remembered that the Prince had described to her the country which now surrounded her with its palm-trees, its caravans, its camels, pyramids, and deserts, so she determined to set about seeking for Hassan, and to find out if possible whether he still remembered her or not.

In this way she went from capital to capital, from court to court, and found nothing but

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disappointment, until at last, wearied and discouraged, she sought a place where she might stay and rest herself.

One evening she came to a magnificent and noble city. Its palaces of marble, with gates of massive silver, its limpid fountains, its bazaars with sculptured arcades, the fertility of the country round about, and the marvellous gardens sparkling with flowers, and filled with all sorts of fruit, made it a region of delights. The habitations, like white nests, were overshadowed by the thick foliage of sycamores, and the women went veiled mysteriously like silent shades. Here Abella decided to seek that rest which she so urgently needed, and flew towards the palace.

It was evening. The gardens were deserted, the gates closed, and the only sounds that came to her listening ear were audible sobs and sighs. She flew noiselessly to a gallery near a room that was dimly lighted. On the mattings that covered the floor, women were stretched at length, and moaned with low or loud moanings; whilst on a pile of cushions in the midst of

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the room reclined an old man, mournful and overcome.

"First of Kings!" cried aloud the oldest of the women, rising suddenly from her place; "will you let them massacre the flesh of your own flesh, and spill the blood of your own veins? . . . . By the Prophet, before I would permit the accomplishment of such a crime, I would go from door to door and beg the ransom of my son! . . . . What taxes will you impose, what measures do you intend to take?"

"Woman, you know not what you say. What tax, what treasure could pay the ransom that they demand?" replied the First of Kings, in a hollow and hopeless voice.

"What?" answered she, whom Abella knew to be the Queen by the boldness of her words, "have you not heard this cruel emissary? They have captured Hassan, your son and mine; they have taken him into their island, and they are going to put out his eyes if this ransom is not paid."

The poor stork at once understood that they

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were talking of her well-beloved Prince, and she listened eagerly to what the King was about to answer.

"I am going to assemble the council," he said at last, "and take the opinion of the old men and the wise. Nothing that is possible shall be neglected; but, alas! I have no hopes of turning aside the fatal stroke. May Allah help us!" Then he dismissed the women, and retired to his own apartments.

The unhappy Abella was ready to faint under this new stroke; but she soon reflected that she might possibly render a service, and be of use to Hassan, so, gathering all her energies, she determined to try to discover the name of the country where her Prince was detained in captivity, and to go and join him there.

By listening near the windows, she learned that Hassan had been carried off by the powerful King Komakoumé, whose kingdom, formed of vast and productive islands, is guarded on every side by the ocean.

The distance to travel was enormous, but

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nothing discouraged Abella; and one day, when the Queen had prepared several despatches for emissaries who were to try to penetrate to Hassan, she entered stealthily into the room where they were placed, took one of them, and began her long and perilous journey.

First she crossed a vast desert, where several times she fully expected to perish from thirst, and then she passed over a mountain so high, that she had never seen one like it, and thought that it must be the loftiest in the whole world. At the top of this mountain she suffered from intense cold, and feared every moment to fall lifeless upon the frozen snow. After that she passed over an immense empire, where all sorts of surprises awaited her. The women there had such little feet that they could hardly walk, and the men wore behind their heads a sort of bell-rope twisted with their own hair, whilst the children, who everywhere else are so pretty and graceful, in this country had flat noses, and a mouth that opened from ear to ear; they were grotesque little monsters, like pot images! And Abella heard these

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people call each other "celestial," whilst they called all other nations barbarians. She sought what was so celestial in them without being able to find it out, but she remembered that it was not the first example of such blindness. She had known a people which called itself the cleverest and bravest in the world—other nations said, the vainest and the most quarrelsome ; another country prided itself on being rich and wise, and its neighbours called it selfish and perfidious ; another nation boasted, without ceasing, of its science and its morality; but Abella had seen, and even seen in print, that the people of this country were very hypocritical, and very fond of stealing timepieces. In a word, the stork had travelled enough, and seen enough, not to be much astonished by the strange things that she saw or heard. Nor was she like certain travellers, who are continually irritated because they cannot find in a foreign country even the disagreeables of their own. She discovered that people could do without many things that had seemed to her indis-

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pensable, and that there were pleasures that she had never suspected. It was with the sincerest admiration that she watched the people of this country using with perfect elegance little sticks of ivory instead of a fork and spoon, and discuss with a tone of serious dignity the quality of a soup made from swallows' nests, or that of a dish of lizards ; but then there were other nations that they called at her father's court " sour-krout-eaters," " frog-eaters," " beef-eaters ;" and no conclusion could be deduced from these tastes as to the qualities or defects of people.

However, in spite of all these wise reflections, Abella was not much pleased with this country, because it was not at all hospitable to strangers. It was necessary to pass through all sorts of formalities to be admitted to some points of this immense territory, and even then the foreigners were often ill-used, or even massacred. As for Abella, she, of course, was independent of these impediments and dangers, and she wanted to see the capital, because she had the means of doing so. She found that it was surrounded

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by an immense wall, where she determined to fix her residence till she felt sufficiently rested to prosecute her travels.

The part of the wall where she first alighted had long been left to decay, and it was flanked by towers that afforded an excellent refuge. The place was lonely and desolate; a naked and arid mountain bounded it on the side of the open country, whilst towards the town it was rendered inaccessible by the heaps of rough stones that had fallen from the ruinous wall itself.

The stork was going to abandon herself to sleep, when she heard a murmur that seemed to come from the foot of the tower. She listened with the greatest attention, and caught distinctly the following words: "It is time for us to set out. . . . what if we were to miss the opportunity?"

"No," replied a man's voice; "it is too soon yet. If he perceives us we are lost!"

"But we shall have to rest on the top of the mountain, and then we will watch his departure concealed behind the rocks. You know that

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he only leaves the grotto once a day to go and drink at the waterfall ; it's the moment that we must seize."

"Very well ; but which of us will risk himself in the grotto to take the treasure ?"

"I will," said the other voice, which was that of a woman. "As for you, let it be your business to keep watch, and let me know of the dragon's arrival when he begins to return, for he has soon finished drinking, and if he surprised us it would be terrible."

"Don't be afraid of anything. We need not take all. You need only fill your sack, and we shall be rich for life. Come, now ! the moon is rising, and he goes to the waterfall at midnight."

Abella dared not stir, and yet she had heard these people talk about a treasure ;—and what if this treasure were considerable enough to ransom Hassan ! . . . At the thought of this she felt a swelling of hope within her heart. But how was she to get hold of it ? Whom did it belong to ? and who were these people who came to take it ? To find out all this it was

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necessary to follow them, and be present at the conclusion of their undertaking.

Slowly and painfully they climbed the barren mountain; and, in spite of the chilly night air, they were in a perspiration. They often stopped and looked about them, to be quite sure that no one followed. The Stork kept them well in sight, and saw them come to the top of the mountain, where they hid themselves behind a mass of rocks.

There was no vegetation in this desolate place; not a tree for refuge in the heat of the day, not a blade of grass to rest the sight, nothing but some grey or yellowish blotches of lichen, meagre and wide apart. Blocks of stone, all dark and disjointed, showed their rents like gaping mouths; but the horror of the place was completed by the presence of an enormous dragon, stretched out upon the rocks, and whose glutinous scales gleamed blue beneath the moon.

Abella watched this monster with terror in its awful stillness, and thought she would die of fear when he began to move.

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First he lifted up his hideous head and breathed noisily, whilst red fire issued from his nostrils, then, with undulations that made his scales ring like the chains of a galley-slave, he went creeping slowly away.

Such was the length of the dragon, that when his head arrived at the rivulet that trickled over the stones, and when he began to drink, the last folds of his enormous tail had not disappeared from the place that his head had quitted.

However, the woman did not renounce her dangerous enterprise, and Abella saw her rush resolutely into the interior of the cavern, which the dragon had now left unguarded.

Pale and trembling, the man watched the terrible beast to give notice of its slightest movement, but suddenly a cry of admiration from the woman caused him to leave his post. Curiosity made him go forwards, cupidity drew him irresistibly into the cavern, and the few seconds that he remained there seemed like centuries to Abella. Already the dragon was in motion, but this time he did not creep or glide; he advanced swiftly by enormous bounds,

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and it was in vain that the Stork uttered her cries of distress, the man and the woman did not come out. Soon, however, they reappeared at the entrance of the grotto, the man bending under the weight of his wealth, the woman blinded by the fire of the jewels heaped together in her petticoat; but at the instant when they quitted the cavern, believing themselves enriched for ever, they were seized in the folds of the horrible beast, which tightened his rings around them and instantly crushed their bones.

Their cry of agony had such an effect upon Abella that she entirely forgot her own danger, and flew at the dragon with a fury and audacity that were new to her. It was in vain that the great beast tried to catch her in his folds, for, borne well above him by her wings, she flew at his eyes as a falcon at the eyes of an Indian deer, and blinded him with her formidable beak. After that the dragon no longer knew where to seek his enemy or avoid her strokes; he darted in every direction the flames of his nostrils, and his howlings echoed along the mountain like thunder from the clouds of a tempest. The

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Stork continued skilfully to avoid the attacks of the blinded beast, and went on striking without intermission. Soon the howlings became feebler, and finally ceased altogether, the great tail lashed the rocks in a last convulsion, and then came perfect stillness.

The Stork settled at a little distance and waited in astonishment to see if the beast would move again, but its body stirred no more. The man and the woman who had been crushed lay there in a shapeless mass. A rivulet of black blood trickled from the great reptile over the stones, and amongst these horrors were scattered the glittering jewels that had been stolen from the cavern.

Wearied with the fight, the Stork felt an irresistible need of rest, and having made sure that she had nothing to fear from the dragon, perched upon a piece of rock and soon fell fast asleep.

When she awoke the next morning, she went anxiously towards the monster, but when she got quite close she made sure that he was dead. "Dead!" she exclaimed to herself; "why, then

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the treasure of the cavern might be dear Hassan's ransom!" She immediately flew to the cave, and remained at the entrance, quite dazzled and stupefied at the sight of so much wealth. Never had she imagined, never had she dreamed of anything like it!

It was a gloomy and cold cavern, full of stalactites; but the stalactites were of the purest diamond. Her joy was wild, but it lasted only an instant. How was she to make the Prince know of this means of saving him? Ah, if she could but speak—if she could even write; but no, she was nothing better than a bird, and, although possessing so precious a secret, she was unable to communicate it. She hoped, however, she was even convinced, that this condition would not be perpetual, and that she would become again what she had been before, the Princess Abella; but how soon would this happen?

She determined to set off immediately for the island where the Prince was confined, and, once there, she would see what it might be possible to accomplish.

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Once again it became necessary to dare the dangers of an unknown sea, and endure new fatigues; but Abella's devotion increased her courage, and after having taken one of the diamonds from the cave, she started immediately on her journey.

She directed her flight towards the largest of the islands that form the kingdom of Komakoumé, knowing that her beloved Prince was a prisoner in his capital.

Having safely crossed the sea, Abella saw a beautiful country, on whose coasts rose wooded hills, with many temples amidst the groves. In the bays were fleets of boats, with their two ends prettily turned up, and decorated with many-coloured flags, that resembled a swarm of butterflies. The cliffs were covered with a multitude of birds of all species, so the Stork concluded that she would not be unkindly treated, and this gave her courage.

In flying over the streets to go to the palace, she noticed the strange little wooden bridges fastened under the feet of the inhabitants to keep them out of the mud; she also observed

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the enormous belts of the women, the great swords of the noblemen, and the slanting eyes of the whole population. Arrived in front of the palace, she flew into the gardens, which were magnificent; and there, from the top of a little temple, she tried her best to guess where Hassan might be. The sound of merry voices roused her from her reflections, and she saw a group of young ladies advancing towards her, who seemed to be in attendance on a lady who walked in front, and who was admirably beautiful, and very splendidly dressed. This one had no belt, but a long train to her dress, which glittered and undulated behind her. The lady's hair was fastened by a great quantity of golden pins, which made a sort of glory round her head; and on her arm she wore a superb bracelet of emeralds.

Abella placed herself where the lady was going to pass, and she stopped to caress her, after which Abella followed, like a tame bird of the palace.

"That poor prisoner," said the beautiful young lady, with a sweet voice, "is really very

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much to be pitied. Far from his country, separated from his family, and menaced with such a horrible fate."

"And if your Highness were to intercede for him?" one of the followers ventured to say, timidly. "He is so handsome! so handsome that everybody is interested in him, and cannot think about him without pity."

"Alas! I have already attempted it without success, and I have excited the jealousy of my lord and master in doing so, and been near losing his favour."

"How can the Emperor refuse anything to his new wife?" exclaimed the pretty attendant.

"As for me," said another, "I would ask it as a proof that he prefers me to his three other wives, and nothing else would convince me of it."

"I will return to the subject," said the young Empress, with a pensive air.

Abella would gladly have kissed the footsteps of this charming lady, for she had clearly understood that it was Hassan in whom she took an interest. She continued to follow step by step

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till the twilight, and learned in this way that the lady's name was Onono.

Just when she began to return towards the palace, and walked close to one of the sheets of water in the garden, Onono was tempted by some water-lilies that floated on the surface; she stretched out her arm, and drawing one towards her, culled it without spoiling the plant. The Stork immediately observed a glittering amongst the leaves of the water-lily, flew to it, and seized in her beak the magnificent bracelet of emeralds that she had admired on the arm of the Empress. She came back immediately to the place that she had left, but the ladies had been in haste to retire, and the Stork went to hide her find in the hollow of a tree, hoping to discover some means of using it so as to be of service to Hassan.

Do what she would, however, she could not manage to discover where he was kept prisoner, and this made her wretchedly miserable. Well knowing that she could not speak with him, she had at least hoped to get a sight of him, but she began to fear that, out of jealousy,

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Komakoumé would keep him in a hard and close captivity.

Soon another misery was added to all those from which the poor Stork suffered already, and this was not to see or meet with Onono any more. She followed everybody, and more particularly the ladies of the court, but the ladies passed sadly by, spoke very low, and only after having looked well around them, like frightened or suspicious people.

At last, however, she found out that Onono had tried again in favour of Hassan, and that the Emperor had become more jealous than ever on that account. He suspected Hassan and Onono of loving each other, and tried to catch them in a snare. "I will grant you Hassan's pardon," he said to the Empress, "if he will consent to marry one of your maids of honour." But Hassan had replied that his heart belonged to a Princess more beautiful than the day, and that he would never marry another. This reply increased the anger of Komakoumé, and he watched all Onono's movements, and forbade her to go out of the palace, lest she should

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THE EMERALD BRACELET.

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endeavour to obtain an interview with Hassan. One day the Emperor, whose jealous eyes nothing escaped, requested in a very severe tone to be informed why Onono had not on her arm the bracelet of emeralds which he had given her as a wedding present, and which she had promised always to wear for his sake. She became troubled, tried to excuse herself, and ended by confessing with tears that she had lost it. But the Emperor would not believe a word of this; he fancied that she wished to make use of it to bribe the keepers of the prison and deliver the Prince, and when once this idea had got possession of his mind, his anger knew no bounds. He caused to be published throughout all his empire that if in three days the bracelet was not brought to the palace, the Empress should be let down into a well head foremost and suspended by the feet until she died, whilst Hassan should be put on an iron cross and roasted to death by a slow fire.

It was already late in the day when the Stork heard the announcement of this terrible sen-

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tence, but she could not tell how to manage so as to return the bracelet; she no longer met with Onono, she could not get near to the Emperor, and, besides that, she feared to be put to death from a suspicion that she had stolen the jewels. However, she made up her mind not to allow innocent people to be sacrificed, and determined to give up the bracelet the next day, whatever might be the risk.

But Abella little knew what a change was going to take place during the night.

She chose for her roosting-place one of the buildings belonging to the palace, and went to sleep there. She dreamed that she beheld once more the court of King Marcus, where they were making great preparations for the marriage of his daughter Lola, who had at last found a Prince that was one-eyed, lame, and ruined by his own extravagance, who aspired to her fortune in order to repair his own; and that Lola had been only too glad to accept him so as not to die an old maid, after having disgusted all her other suitors by her stupidity and vanity. Abella saw the wedding feast in her dream, and

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distinctly heard Queen Cunigonde pronounce these words: "Now the two storks will recover their human shape and become Princesses again. I wonder where they can be?" A sudden movement awoke Abella, who at first felt very ill at ease, and as if she were in danger; but what was her astonishment, her delight, and her embarrassment when she clearly perceived that her dream had been realized? She had become once again the Princess Abella; but the worst of it was that she was still perched on the old wall that the Stork had chosen for her roosting-place, and which, though convenient enough for a bird with a pair of strong wings, was not nearly so convenient nor so safe for a Princess, however clever and courageous.

Notwithstanding her joy, she had a horrible fear of the daylight. What would people say when they caught her up there in the morning? So she at once attempted to get down; but what was very easy indeed for the stork, was almost impossible for the Princess. However, she came to the ground at last, but not without having left behind her some fragments of her dress,

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and in her torn clothes she looked much more like a beggar-girl than a Princess. She ran to the tree where she had hidden the bracelet of emeralds, took it, and went towards the palace, where, at the dawn of day, she asked an audience of the Emperor, saying that she brought news of the bracelet.

Komakoumé gave orders for her to be admitted instantly, for he loved Onono very much indeed, and desired nothing so much as that her innocence might be satisfactorily proved to him.

"Majesty," said Abella to the Emperor, "what would you give to the person who brought the Empress's bracelet, and could prove to you that she had not given it, but lost it?"

"I would promise to that person," replied the Emperor, "to grant his three first requests, provided that they did not make me a perjurer."

"By what does the Emperor swear to keep these promises?"

"By the shades of my ancestors!" said the Emperor, rising with great solemnity.

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"Here is the bracelet!" said Abella, handing it to him. And then she told how it had been lost, only she carefully concealed the part which she had herself played in this adventure for fear that he might not believe her. She said that, having observed *a* stork which picked up the jewel amongst the leaves of the water-lily, and carried it to the hollow of a tree, she had climbed up to the hole to get it and give it up, and that as the tree was rugged she had torn her clothes in doing so. This was her way of explaining the wretched condition in which she had been obliged to present herself.

Komakoumé was very much astonished by this story, and inquired next what requests the Princess had to make to him.

"Sire," she answered, "I am of royal race, in spite of the miserable condition in which you now behold me, and I must first ask for a costume in accordance with my rank."

"It shall be done as you wish," answered the Emperor; "now what is to be the second favour?"

"When my first desire is realized, I wish to

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talk with the Prince Hassan, privately, without a witness."

"It is well," the Emperor replied; "but do not ask his pardon, I have sworn that he shall not obtain it without the ransom."

"I will make my third request after having seen the Prince," said Abella.

Komakoumé went immediately to give liberty to the Empress with marks of affection that were not altogether without remorse. He recommended Abella to her care, and gave orders for her to be permitted to see the Prince as soon as she felt disposed.

Onono showed the greatest kindness to her deliverer, and begged her to choose amongst her most beautiful toilettes the one which she preferred. The Princess accepted this at once, she was in such a hurry to see the Prince. And yet she wanted to make sure whether or not he loved her yet, and whether he had remained faithful to the recollection of her. She gave orders, therefore, that the despatch she had received in his father's palace should be delivered to Hassan, for it announced the arrival of an

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emissary, and then she requested that his eyes might be bandaged before she was introduced into his dungeon.

As soon as her orders were executed, it was announced that the Prince was ready to receive her; she, therefore, went to him, and they were left alone together.

"Highness!" began Abella, disguising her voice, "I have been sent by your parents to inform you that they have asked and obtained for you the hand of a Princess whose fortune is such that it would easily pay your ransom."

"Madam," replied the Prince, with a saddened air, "I perceive that Destiny ever mocks me in offering me good things that it is impossible for me to accept. How could I go to a Princess for whom I have no affection, and promise her a heart which is already given?"

"Perhaps you will not persevere in this rigid refusal when you learn that for the love of you I have undertaken this long voyage, and that I offer myself to save you," replied Abella. "I desired that your eyes might be bandaged in

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order not to have the humiliation of being recognized by you if you refused my hand."

"Madam," replied Hassan, with emotion, "I assure you of my respect and of my deep gratitude, but, as I have already told you, my heart has made its choice; and although it no longer has the hope of again beholding the Princess by whose image it is entirely occupied, it will be faithful to her memory."

"All these expressions of courtesy only serve to disguise your refusal. Perhaps you fancy that I am ugly or deformed, because your eyes are bandaged at my request; but I can assure you that my charms have been sung by many poets."

"Beauty has been given to many," replied Hassan, "but the Princess Abella is alone more beautiful than the day; she is like the rose amongst the other flowers, like the sun amongst the other heavenly bodies."

At these words the Princess felt a great joy in the depths of her heart. "Highness!" she added, rather maliciously, "my vanity cannot suffer such disdain. I wish to know if, after

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having seen me, you will persist in preferring a rival." Saying these words she lifted the bandage from Hassan's eyes, and stood before him radiant with happiness.

"Abella!" cried the Prince, falling on his knees; "am I dreaming? can it be possible?"

But Abella assured him that it was really herself, and to convince him of her own reality lent him her hand, which he covered with kisses.

As soon as the first emotions of surprise and happiness were over, Hassan wanted to know by what concurrence of circumstances Abella had managed to reach him. Having confidence in him, she narrated the whole story, without omitting the cry of pain that she had uttered above his head when she quitted him. "O my dear Abella!" cried he, "if I had only known who that stork was, I should have followed her everywhere."

It was arranged between them that she should repeat to the Emperor the fable that Abella had invented to make sure of the Prince's sentiments. She was to be represented as a Princess of immense wealth, and engaged

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to Hassan. The third favour that she would ask for was to be the liberty to take away the Prince on his parole as far as his own kingdom. They were to be escorted by a fleet of honour, a part of which should receive the treasure and carry it as a ransom to Komakoumé, whilst the other half should guard the Prince and Princess till they reached the court of the First of Kings.

The Emperor, to whom Onono wished to submit her request personally, granted everything, only too happy to be forgiven his passing fit of jealousy, and it was agreed that Hassan's ransom should consist of a boxful of diamonds, the box to be so big that two men could hardly lift it, and the stones of a quality equal to that which she had given to the Emperor. Besides this, she promised, in order to express her sense of the Empress's kindness, to send her as a gift of friendship a diamond bigger than any in the treasures of Komakoumé. After this, Abella was treated with the most profound respect.

A splendid ship was prepared for her and

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the Prince, with sails of silk, and cordage of silver and gold thread. A guard of honour was sent on board, with six blind musicians, especially demanded by Abella, to amuse her during the voyage. This seemed strange at first, but the Princess explained that the music of the blind is always the most beautiful and the most tender, because they sing what their souls behold; "and that is the reason," she added, "why there exists a barbarous custom in certain countries that I have visited, where they put out the eyes of nightingales."

At length the ship sailed, followed by twelve smaller vessels as an escort, whilst Komakoumé's fleet fired a royal salute that caused the sea and land to tremble.

After a fortunate voyage, Hassan cast anchor before the town with the great wall, under pretext of going to seek for a provision of tea for his betrothed. He took with him nobody but Abella and the six blind men, so as not to awaken the suspicions of the inhabitants; at least, this was the reason that he gave; for he said that they were always afraid lest some

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stranger should discover the secrets which made their commerce celebrated throughout the world.

Abella guided Hassan and the blind men up to the top of the mountain where she had fought the terrible dragon, and a shiver of fear seized her again when she approached the well-remembered grotto. But there was no longer any danger, and the wealth belonged to her both by right of discovery and by right of conquest. She and Hassan passed the night in filling the great sacks, with which they loaded the blind men, and returned to the ship before the dawn. Early in the day they announced that the ransom had arrived, and before the dazzled eyes of the sailors they filled with diamonds a strong box that two men lifted with difficulty. Then Hassan dismissed the part of the escort which was to give the ransom into the hands of the Emperor; and Abella did not forget the great diamond for Onono. The voyage was now resumed, other sacks of diamonds being hidden in the hold of the ship; and these were intended for the dowry of Abella.

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Although it was a long voyage that they had before them, it did not seem long either to Hassan or the Princess. They told each other their adventures, and communicated their thoughts; most of all, they talked about their love.

They arrived at last, and the news flew to the palace with a wonderful rapidity; but the First of Kings refused to believe it, and when he beheld his son his emotion was such that he nearly fell where he was standing. However, he recovered from this, and cried aloud with fervour, "What is written is written; may Allah be praised!"

Then he learned all that Abella had done for Hassan; however, he was not informed that she had ever been a stork, for there are facts that one is obliged to keep secret to conciliate public opinion.

Hassan's father and mother paid the greatest attention to the Princess, and testified a deep respect for her ever since they had examined the diamonds which composed her dowry.

The wedding of Hassan and Abella was

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magnificent, and a numerous family crowned their happiness. The Princess acquired a reputation for wisdom and knowledge which spread far from her kingdom; and her people believed secretly that she was more than mortal, and that the spirits obeyed her, and were her messengers. The First of Kings had published an edict which punished with death throughout the kingdom whoever killed or vexed a stork; and every year the Princess was seen watching for the arrival of these birds and observing their departure, which explains how she came to know all that went on in foreign countries.

"Are you happy, after all?" said, one day, Prince Hassan to his wife, many years after their marriage; "and don't you sometimes rather regret not to be a stork any more?"

"I regret nothing when I am near you," she answered; "but you must admit that storks are sometimes useful where men could do very little."

"It would ill become me to deny it; but I wished to know if you regretted nothing—if you are perfectly happy."

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"Oh, yes, very happy, indeed! And yet I regret my poor sister Irene. Why is she not with us to share our happiness?"

"If Irene had had your courage, my well-beloved," replied the Prince, "she would be with us now; but she allowed herself to be discouraged in adversity; she did not resist her sorrow, as you did, nor contend against evil circumstances, nor did she devote herself for another. Sad and weary, she fell asleep for ever; but you have lived for victory after many trials. Everything is wisely ordered here below!"

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THE

RUSTIC AND HIS EELS.

A YOUNG rustic in Normandy had just lost his parents and inherited a small property, which, if he had cultivated it carefully and in earnest, ought to have yielded a sufficiently good income for a person in his line of life. When Jean went to visit the cottage which fell to his lot, the green meadow bounded by the thick hedge, the great field of red earth which gave such mealy and such white potatoes, the willows watered by the clear stream—when he saw the ears of wheat, the growing blades of corn, undulating beneath

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the breeze, he rubbed his hands with satisfaction, admitting that his father had really managed matters well, and that every necessary of life might be got from the farm which he had bequeathed. The house was large and good; there were barns and haylofts to house the crops, and stables for the oxen that pastured in the meadow. Whatever was not consumed by his own household would be sold, that his pockets might be always well filled, and that he might have gold and silver to jingle together at fairs, for everybody to know, as the custom is amongst those who have the wherewithal. All these thoughts buzzed together in Jean's head, and caused him an inexpressible pleasure. Soon, however, he began to reflect that, as the ears of wheat were turning yellow, it would be time to reap; but what hot work it is to stoop from morning till night on the dry and burning ground! "Well, it's a hard time, but soon over!" He observed, on coming back, that the thistles were smothering his corn, and that it would be necessary

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to weed it immediately; the potatoes wanted hoeing, the meadow wanted mowing, it was time to cut willow branches, to mend the hedges; and then the thatch of his house, covered here and there with tufts of green and red moss, was rotting, and required to be, at least partially, renewed.

Jean's pleasure in visiting his property had gradually diminished, and he began to perceive that to have all the things which at first appeared actually in his possession, he must work without intermission all the days of his life. It was not enough to have the land, he must give it all his time and all his strength. Now Jean had little taste for labour, and the greatest part of his happiness in knowing himself to be a proprietor had been the hope of having nothing to do. After many reflections, which became less and less agreeable as he considered all the duties and obligations of a farmer, Jean determined to sell his inheritance, and to put his money into trade, thinking that trade brought handsome profits without any other trouble than

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that of walking about with one's hands in one's pockets, and smiling at customers, as he had seen his old neighbour, Nicholas Triquet, do, when he went to visit the neighbouring town, in the handsome grocer's shop that he had set up with the money that came to him from his mother. The picture of Nicholas, his old schoolfellow, become white and fat, dressed in brown cloth, and walking slowly amongst his barrels and boxes, talking over the news of the day with the customers whom his apprentices served, this picture presented itself to Jean's memory with such precision and such an attractive charm, that he was surprised that he had ever been able for one moment to think of any other walk in life than this delightful business of a grocer.

A very little while afterwards he had sold his property, and with a heavy purse, a light foot, and a head full of hopes, he went towards the town where his friend Nicholas dwelt.

As he followed the course of the river, bordered with trees, for the sake of its cool-

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ness, he observed many fishermen's dwellings at intervals along its banks. The children played on the thresholds, in the shadow of the nets that were drying, or they rolled themselves in those that were being repaired by the old men who were unable to cast the net or handle the oar. Boats were fastened to the shore, and the women took from them the fish which were to be carried for sale to the market. Jean was already rather tired with his walk, so he sat down near one of these fishwives, and watched her as she arranged the fish carefully in baskets full of nettles to keep them cool. One by one she chose carp, barbel, tench, and pike; then she filled a little net with cray-fish, and so completed her basket. Then she returned to the boat, and took from the well in it a live eel, and offered it to Jean.

"Look, sir," she said, "how frisky and fat it is! if you are going to the town, it would be a very acceptable present for a friend; cooked with savoury herbs, it's a dish fit for a king!"

Jean thought that he might indeed take this

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THE RUSTIC AND THE EELS.

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little gift to his friend Nicholas, from whom he wanted to get some information about his business.

"Upon my word," he answered, "it's a capital idea, but it isn't easy to carry an eel that is always stretching and twisting itself like that."

"Oh, I'll kill it for you," answered the fishwoman, who took a knife from her pocket and immediately slit the eel's head.

Jean opened his eyes in astonishment. "Why, I've always seen eels killed with a knock; they say they are awkward to kill, but I never before saw anybody split an eel's head. It's a good way, though, for they're soon killed."

"Who thinks about that?" said the fishwoman, with a sarcastic look. "It's so as not to lose the pearl that there is inside their heads."

"What!" cried Jean, in amazement; "have eels pearls in their heads?"

"Didn't you know that?" exclaimed the fishwoman, in her turn, quite as much aston-

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ished; "why, everybody knows that eels have pearls in their heads, only they are not always grown big enough to be seen." And, having got her money, she put the basket on her head, and set off with a brisk step, on her way to the market.

Jean remained plunged in the surprise of his discovery, which threatened to change all his plans once more. For what was the use of troubling himself to make purchases, to look after apprentices, and to be shut up in a shop to get profits that were often quite uncertain (for one must consider the risk of being cheated, and the risk of bad debts); what was the use of giving one's self all these bothers, when to have pearls—pearls that are sold so dear!—one had nothing to do but open eels' heads? . . . . The grocer's business was decidedly at a discount in Jean's opinion, since he had discovered a sure and easy means of making a fortune; only he felt astonished that nobody had ever thought about it before, and trembled already, lest his intention might be guessed at and fore-

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stalled—hence he resolved to surround himself with the deepest mystery, and not to reveal his project to a single soul.

The very next morning he returned to the fishermen to buy all their eels, and with a heart beating with hope, he carried them home and shut himself in with two turns of the key. Alas, in all these heads not one single pearl was to be seen! "Come, I haven't much luck to-day," thought Jean; "I must begin again." And he began the next day to buy all the eels that he could find, but the same disappointment awaited him. He reflected that they were very probably too young, and that the pearls had not had time to form themselves, so he chose only the biggest and longest eels. Not obtaining any better result, he thought that, perhaps, in the creatures' old age, the pearls might have deteriorated and disappeared; so after that he bought nothing but middle-sized eels, which, however, gave him no more success than the others. However, he did not lose courage, saying that a single happy discovery would

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very soon recompense him, and that nothing but a little perseverance was necessary to success. Seeing that this fortune, which he was so eagerly seeking, appeared farther and farther away from him, he got into a temper of angry resolution, and determined to recover all he had lost, for now but little of his money remained. The people of the neighbourhood fancied that he did a great trade in eels, and brought him considerable quantities, which he always bought, from an apprehension that he might refuse the pearl that was to restore his wealth.

One evening he perceived, with much sadness, that he had come to his last crown-piece, and that because he had not chosen to cultivate his own property, he would be reduced to work for others, and how much harder! . . . . But he must live, and this single crown was all the money that remained. Just at this moment he heard a violent knocking at the door, and called out in a very angry tone, "Who's there?" "It is I, sir; I am bringing you a superb eel,"

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the visitor answered from outside. Jean hesitated for a minute. "It's my last chance," he said to himself, "and perhaps it's the lucky one! How much will you take for it?" "A crown," replied the voice. "A crown let it be, then!" and Jean opened the door and gave his last crown in exchange for the eel.

The twilight had already fallen, but Jean, in his impatience, did not wait to light his lamp; by the feeble light of the latest rays of day he was about to sacrifice the last victim of his ambition. But a loud hissing was heard, the serpent that Jean held in his hand, and which he took for an eel, sprang up boldly, wound itself about his neck, and poured a mortal poison into his veins. The death-noises that filled his ears ceased at the last instant of his life, and he heard the serpent, which said, "Thou hast sacrificed thy fortune and thy life in the pursuit of a myth; know, then, that it is folly to expect from any creature that which lies outside of its natural gifts, and that no one is to be blamed because

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he is not something else. It is as foolish to expect grace in the ox, strength in the nightingale, or perfection in a human being, as the pearl in the eel's head."

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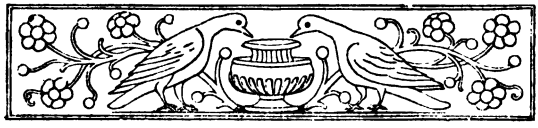

ADINE AND THE SEAL.

WHAT a darling and sweet little creature was Adine, with her great velvety eyes, her laughing, roguish mouth, and her wild locks of hair, rebellious against every sort of restraint from comb or ribbon! Adine was her mother's sole delight, who loved her so much that she did like many other mothers of your acquaintance, my little friends, she spoiled her daughter exceedingly. The little girl, however, had many good qualities. Careful of the playthings which were given her, she did not break them into a thousand pieces, nor did she leave them on the lawn or the walks to be spoiled by the night-

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dew ; no, when she began to get tired of them, she gave them to the poor children in the neighbourhood whose parents could not make such purchases, far beyond their means, or else she took them to the little children who were sick, and had nothing to amuse them, so that they tried to make a little variety in the long weary hours by half-shutting their eyes as they lay in bed till they fancied they saw shadows pass, or else by rubbing them at night to see blue and yellow stars fly about in the curtains. You all have tried that, I daresay, but you would scarcely be satisfied if you had no better amusement, especially if you were very poorly, and soon it would begin to seem very tiresome. Adine, too, was very neat about her person ; she was never to be seen with dirty hands or spotted clothes ; she learnt all the lessons that her mother gave her ; yet with all these good qualities she had one great defect—she was disobedient ! Not that she disobeyed always, and in all circumstances, but from time to time, from caprice or thoughtlessness, nobody knew exactly for what reason. Her mother had explained to her that she

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exposed herself to many dangers in not listening to the recommendations of older and more experienced people, and the little girl well understood that her good mother was quite right; still she did not amend, and the day came at last when she was cruelly punished. She possessed a tiny garden, which she worked in as she liked, and from which she often looked out upon the sea and the shore whilst learning her lessons. She was taken upon the sands when the tide went out, to pick up shells or seek for anemones, but she had been strictly forbidden to go out by herself.

Now it happened one evening, when her mother saw that she was busy in her garden, she left her there, and returned to write a few letters. Adine had dug a hole, and, after filling it with wet sand, she thought that, perhaps, sea-anemones might grow and flower in it, so she immediately wished to go and seek for some near the sea. She might easily have asked her mother to take her, but, being very eager to realize her wish, she thought it best to go there alone, it was so near! The tide had quite gone down, nobody was in

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sight; Adine foresaw no danger, and expected to be back in the garden before her absence had been discovered. She went out by the little door that opened towards the sea, and began to run till she met with those pools of sandy water where anemones usually grow. She found several at once, but their colours did not seem bright enough, so she went on with her search, not perceiving that the twilight was coming on. Soon, however, a mass of rock-fragments, shingle, and empty shells presented what she wanted in abundance—anemones of all shades; some of them were yellow in the stalk, with a sort of pale lilac hair, others an alabaster white fringed with purple. She found green ones with a star on the top, and others like tempting little cakes in their collars of crimped paper. She could not make up her mind not to take this one that was like a mushroom with an edge of gimp, and that other which seemed like a cucumber with a spider coming out of it. The anemone that she had not gathered always seemed the most beautiful or the strangest; and as anemones stick to their dwelling-places, each

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of them cost a great deal of trouble to take it, and much more time than the little girl believed, for she was entirely absorbed by the eagerness of her search. All at once a slight noise attracted her attention, and made her look at the sea; then she saw the water rippling at the surface, and out of it peered a head with brown limpid eyes, so intelligent that they seemed almost human. It was an enormous sort of fish, which soon jumped on the shore, and after having looked steadily at Adine for some time, came towards her dragging itself heavily and awkwardly with a jerky motion on the shingle. Adine was so frightened that she could neither run away nor cry out, but what was her astonishment when she recognized a Seal, and heard it talk! "Little one!" said he, with a grave and soft voice, "what are you seeking for? Why lose your time in gathering these pale anemones which will wither to-morrow? I know flowers of rose coral that never fade."

"Where do they grow?" asked the child, wondering, and forgetting all her fears, the voice of the Seal was so sweet to hear.

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"They grow near the palace of mother-of-pearl that belongs to the Queen of the Waves."

"Oh!" cried Adine, "how I should like to see them."

"May I take you there?"

"Is it very far?"

"No, a few seconds will be enough for the journey."

"Ah, but mamma will be anxious," replied the little girl, who began to perceive what a fault she had committed on seeing the sun disappear on the horizon. "Good Seal, come and seek me to-morrow, when I shall have permission and time to admire the marvels you tell me of."

"To-morrow I shall be a long way off, little one, and if you don't come immediately you will never see the mother-of-pearl palace of the Queen of the Waves, nor the gardens with bowers of coral brighter than beds of geraniums, nor the basins of white coral where the Sea Feathers swim, nor the Virgularia which has silver stars for fruit, nor the baskets of rose coral whose colour is softer than that of your earthly queen of flowers. Come, then, to-

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day, whilst it is yet possible for me to show you all these things. To-morrow it will be too late."

Adine was burning with curiosity to see all these marvels. "I shall tell mamma what I have seen," she thought, "and she will forgive me." Then she said, "Let us set off immediately, good Seal, so that I may get back very soon."

"Sit upon my back, little one, and be afraid of nothing. Mind you hold on well."

Adine heard no more. She felt herself lifted up by a vigorous bound, and carried down into the sea, where she believed herself lost. The water made a great noise in her ears, filled her eyes, and clung all round her limbs like a gluey greenish shroud; terrified and unable to breathe, she became insensible.

When she recovered it was in a strange, mysterious place, filled with a pale bluish-green light, by which she could not see very well at first. However, she had air to breathe, and seemed to be in a large hall, where she lay on a bed of seaweed, round which she could

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dimly perceive several delicate-looking yet charming creatures, who bent over her with interest and curiosity, whilst they asked questions of the Seal which had brought her there, and was now blowing as hard as he could upon her cold limbs to bring back the power of movement.

"Where did you find this queer little creature?" asked a voice clear as that of a fountain. "Do you believe, old Seal, that she will ever be able to live here?"

"I met with her near the sea," he answered, "and I brought her here according to the orders of the Queen, my mistress, to serve as a companion for her daughter, White Foam, whom you can amuse no longer, for she knows all your stories, and is tired of all your games. The little mortal will tell her stories of the earth, and teach her the games that belong to her own species. I hope that she will get accustomed to our way of living, and that my sovereign will be satisfied with her servant."

"Oh, look!" said another voice, soft as a breeze of May, "what queer little red things

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this child wears on her feet. What can be the good of them? tell us, old Seal, you who know the earth." At these words, Adine, much surprised by the interest excited by her little slippers, half opened her eyes, and perceived that some of the beings who surrounded her had bodies which ended like those of fishes; so she recognized the Mermaids of whom she had read in the story-books; whereas others, light and delicate, graceful and supple, were Undines, who had been sometimes pointed out to her on the crests of the sea-waves, but had only at those times been visible for a single second, as they always plunged down again as soon as anybody saw them. The child then knew that she was at the bottom of the sea; and, roused quite out of her torpor, began to weep.

"Ah," cried several voices, "what a wonder! Pearls are coming out of her eyes!" It was the Undines who were astonished in this way, as in the realms of the Queen of the Waves tears are altogether unknown, for neither her subjects nor she herself can weep.

"Cruel Seal, why have you brought me into

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such a sad place? Take me back immediately to my poor mother, who must be very anxious on account of my long absence," said Adine, as soon as she dared to speak.

"I have not yet shown you what I promised, little one. Dry your tears, and come with me, that I may present you to my royal mistress, who alone can give you permission to see the enchanted gardens." After saying these words, the Seal began to hobble along, followed by the little girl, who trembled very much, not knowing where she was being led, and constantly in fear lest that terrible sea which she heard murmuring above her head should break the crystal roof and overwhelm her again as during her late voyage.

The Seal came to a door of mother-of-pearl guarded by enormous sword-fish, armed with their swords, and by great saw-fish; whilst torpedoes, even yet more dangerous in their apparent tranquillity, and with their mysterious power, shone like meteors in the obscure light. These terrible guards made way for the Seal, whom the favour of the Queen placed high at

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court, and who went on, still followed by Adine, to the foot of the throne where sat the Queen of the Waves, and waited until it pleased his sovereign to address a word to him.

"Is that the child?" she asked at once, in a tone of voice so loud and piercing that it terrified the little girl; but the Seal reassured her, whispering very low that Her Majesty's voice, being accustomed to command the angry waves in the midst of tempests, could not lower itself so as not to make the walls shake when she happened to be inside her palace.

"Yes, your Majesty," the courtier hastily answered, "and the child solicits the favour of admission to the royal gardens."

"Let the Princess White Foam be immediately informed that her orders are executed," the Queen said to two flying-fish, which were always behind her throne, and which flew off on the instant, to the great astonishment of Adine, who had never seen a fish of any kind fly in the air. As the Queen of the Waves spoke no more, but looked at the little girl with a per-

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sistence that was truly embarrassing, Adine did not dare to look at Her Majesty, but occupied herself instead by glancing round the throne-room, where everything was new to her. Although the palace was under the sea, the water was kept entirely out of it, except in basins and fountains, for ornament. Its walls, as the Seal had told Adine before, were in gleaming mother-of-pearl; whereas the ceiling, of the purest and most transparent crystal, showed all kinds of fishes that played together in the sea. Living plants hung from the ceiling—plants that lived and felt as animals do; and they were of the most exquisite delicacy of hue, and incredibly light and thin. Some of them were like transparent bulbs, from which escaped long branches of purple and orange, twisting in zigzags; others, like horns of plenty turned upside down, poured out a cascade of silky hair, with little purple fruits, fastened with a ribbon of lustrous rose-colour. There were the Medusæ; and there were the Beroës too, semitransparent balls, with the colours of the rainbow, whose phosphorescent light illuminated the dwelling, which

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was rather gloomy, notwithstanding its incalculable riches.

Adine was disturbed in her observations by the entrance of White Foam, who ran up to her, kissed her with much vivacity on both cheeks, and said to her, "By what name am I to call you, my little friend?" But the child looked at the Princess without thinking of answering, so much was she dazzled by her beauty. Her name suited her excellently; her skin was of a foam-like whiteness, upon which the collars and bracelets of fine pearls which she wore appeared quite dull and poor. Her mouth was redder than the purple coral of her mother's domains; and her long golden hair fell over the corslet of precious stones, which she wore under a veil of gauze; she was nearly as tall as Adine, but not quite. "What is the matter with you now, that you can't speak?" White Foam went on.

"I want to go back to mamma," sobbed the child.

Here the terrible voice of the Queen burst forth like a clarion, as she said these words:

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"Never shalt thou return to the earth, little mortal. Thou shalt be taught to swim, to follow the Undines and the Mermaids in their games on the surface of my empire; but remember that, being of an inferior race to ours, for we are immortal, thou owest us obedience, and an attempt to escape from our power would expose thee to a terrible chastisement."

These words only increased the poor little girl's terror, for she reproached herself bitterly with her disobedience. She, who had never been able to obey her mother, who was so good, and exacted so little, would now be compelled to submit to all the wishes of an imperious Queen, under penalty of incurring frightful punishments. She saw herself in imagination already delivered to the ferocious monsters which guarded the entrance of the palace, and she felt frozen with apprehension; but these gloomy thoughts were deepened by the dread of never again beholding her dear mother, whose tenderness she now too well remembered. How gladly would Adine have rushed into her mother's arms had she

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been able to awake from this horrible nightmare! and with what feelings of repentance would she have taken the firm resolution to be obedient! but it was now too late, and she knew that she was not dreaming. White Foam guessed at her despair, drew her into the garden, and tried to amuse and console her. "You shall be my sister," she said, "and I will show you all the beautiful things in my mother's dominions." But Adine remained sad, her eyes drowned in tears; and when at length, overcome by fatigue, she slumbered an instant, she was heard murmuring, "Mother! oh, mother!"

How long a time passed in this way Adine herself could hardly tell, for in these strange regions, where the sun does not appear, the night is almost like the day, and they can only be distinguished by the phosphorescent gleaming of the sea around the royal palace, which sometimes resembles a vast conflagration, and sometimes the aurora borealis. Months went on, years it may have been, and still she sighed for the earth, and recounted the beauties

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of it to the Princess, praising its flowers, its birds, its sun; and White Foam listened to these details with avidity, and waited patiently for her twelfth year, the time when she might be permitted to rise upon the crest of the waves, and see at a distance the shores of this wondrous earth. "How can your flowers be more beautiful than ours?" she sometimes inquired of her friend; "they can neither be more varied, nor of richer colours."

"No, but your flowers have no perfume, your birds have no song, and your empire has no sun!" Then she attempted to describe the sun. "He shines," she said, "more than your sea or your jewels, he warms the earth and its inhabitants, and makes the whole creation glad."

"Yet the place we live in is very beautiful," replied the Princess. "Do your kings ride as my mother does, in a rosy shell drawn by dolphins, and guarded on every side by an army of enormous whales and terrible sharks, which all obey her? No, they cannot even save their own ships, which are at the mercy of the waves.

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The mortals perish in shipwrecks, we often see their bodies devoured by fishes, and our servants bring us the things that belonged to them. The silken hangings, the gold and silver ornaments, that you see here came to us in that way, but our riches are no more in danger than our persons. Really, Adine, you ought to consider yourself very fortunate to be here. Then, seeing clearly that she had not convinced her friend, she had recourse to all sorts of games for her amusement. Sometimes the two mounted together upon the enormous shell of a sea-tortoise, and rode thus without fatigue through the gardens; at other times they were carried upon the backs of whales, which swam on the covered lakes in the palace garden, for they were not yet permitted to risk themselves outside; and, indeed, Adine could not have followed her companion amongst the waves; although she swam very well now for a mortal, she was obliged to keep to the surface of the water to be able to breathe. She was beloved by all the court for her sweetness, and especially admired for the ease and grace of her motion, for the Undines and

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Sirens, so supple and elegant in their element, could only walk with difficulty and awkwardness, being compelled to make continual efforts in a sort of exercise they were not accustomed to. The Seal had often tried to make his peace with Adine, but she had repelled with indignation all his advances and excuses. She considered him as the prime cause of her misfortunes, and had told him that some day he would have to reproach himself with her death, for she could never survive the grief of being entirely separated from her mother. The Seal, however, did not cease to watch over her continually, being anxious to make her forget the wrong that he had done to her.

When White Foam had reached her twelfth year, there was great rejoicing in the kingdom of the Queen of the Waves; but the Princess waited for evening with a feverish impatience, as then, for the first time, she would be permitted to rise to the surface of the sea, with the Sirens, and behold the open sky. Adine had begged to be taken with her, and White Foam had

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promised to present this request to her mother at this time, when nothing she asked could be refused. In vain it was urged that the little mortal had nearly died when she sank through the waves. The Seal offered to take her up so quickly that she would only suffer a little; and the Queen of the Waves, overcome by her daughter's solicitations, ended by consenting, after having received from her prisoner a solemn promise that she would not attempt to escape. Then the Sirens surrounded White Foam, who, eager and impatient, rushed through the waves, more graceful than a bird in the air. As soon as they reached the surface, the Sirens loosened their long golden hair, and began their magic songs, whilst the Seal swam as fast as he could towards an island at a little distance from the shore, in order to deposit Adine there, who was half suffocated. The fresh air soon brought her round, and the breath of her protector warmed her; but she gave him neither thanks nor attention, and all her looks were steadily fixed upon the shore, which stretched away not far from there.

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Hidden amongst the thin vegetation of this little island, she could discern upon the main land human forms, like shades in the twilight, and she asked with anguish if her mother were not amongst them. Voices that came near awoke her from her reverie. It was the Undines, who came to require the Seal's help for White Foam, as she was already wearied. They called the Seal several times in vain, and at last he came mysteriously out of a sort of cavern, which went deep into the rock, and he tried to escape from observation. Then, believing that nobody had noticed him, he went at once to the Princess. Adine remained alone, and felt a curiosity as to what this hiding-place might contain; so she went to it slowly, without making a noise. She saw nothing, but after some time she heard flute-like sounds, and as she remained motionless, and nothing revealed her presence, very soon two little seals came out of their retreat, and began to play upon the edge of the rock. They played some time in this way without perceiving the presence of a gigantic albatross, which dashed at one of

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them, and gave it several strokes with its terrible beak. The contest was too unequal for the victim to have a single chance of escaping death; and, already bleeding and giddy, it was going to become the prey of the aggressor, when Adine, who had seen everything, and felt her heart moved by pity, took the biggest stones that she could find near, and flung them with all her might at the albatross, trying to frighten it at the same time with her voice. She hit the albatross, which was alarmed, too, by her cries; so he thought it best to spread his great wings, and sail away. Then she came up to the poor little wounded seal, washed its wounds with sea-water and a soft weed for a sponge, and caressed it softly to reassure it. The big Seal came back and caught Adine just as she was doing this; and his beautiful green eyes, so intelligent and expressive, fixed themselves upon her with an infinite thankfulness. On seeing the wounds of his little one, and the precipitate flight of the albatross, he had understood all. "I have taken you from your mother," said he to Adine, "and you have

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saved my little one! . . . . What can I do to obtain your forgiveness and prove my gratitude? . . . Shall I take you back to the main land at the peril of my life? Speak, for after this I owe more to you than to my sovereign, and I shall obey all your orders."

"Alas!" she answered, "there are two strong reasons which prevent me from profiting by your generous offer. In the first place, I will not risk your life or liberty, which are necessary to your family; and, besides that, I am bound by a solemn promise not to attempt to escape. I have been obliged to give this promise to the Queen of the Waves to obtain the melancholy pleasure of seeing the earth from a distance. . . . If I could but see my mother," she added, after a long silence, "and be sure that she was still living."

"Listen to me!" answered the Seal, in a low voice; "if you will trust me, I will take you at night to the shore where I first met you. Then you can go wherever you please, and I shall wait to take you back under the sea. I will manage so as to escape the notice of the

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ADINE AND THE ALBATROSS.

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guards, and your wish will be accomplished: will you forgive me then?"

"Oh, I will forgive you!" cried Adine, transported with delight at the idea of seeing her mother again. After this it was arranged that, to avoid all suspicion, a night like this should be chosen, when White Foam would come again to the surface of the sea, and the Seal, instead of depositing his burden upon an island, would carry her to the shore of the main land.

The few days that elapsed between the first and second excursions that White Foam made seemed to Adine miserably long, and when the night came she trusted herself courageously to the Seal for her cruel passage through the suffocating water. Very soon they were separated from their companions, and advanced towards the shore. The little girl, who could hardly believe herself on the firm land, recognized immediately the roads that she had been accustomed to walk in, and went as fast as she could in the direction of her home, which she very soon reached. When

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she got to the little gate that opened upon the beach, she lifted the latch softly and entered the garden. All was lonely, but a lamp shone through the shutters, so she knew somebody was in the house. She paid a short visit to her little garden; nothing was changed in it; the little spade and cart, relics of infancy, had been piously kept, and the very same kinds of flowers were cultivated still. At this touching proof of remembrance Adine's heart swelled, and her stifled sobs nearly smothered her. She kept them still, and went towards the house to try to see the inside, when steps upon the sand made her hide herself precipitately under an arbour. A thin dark form came slowly along, dressed in long mourning clothes; a sad sigh was heard in the silence of the night, the face turned half round, pale and melancholy, towards the arbour; it was Adine's mother, who wept for her daughter whom she believed to be dead, and who was separated from her by nothing but a few branches! Oh! how the child longed to rush into her mother's arms! but that might not be, she was bound by her

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promise, she must return to the cold dominions of the Queen of the Waves. Nevertheless, when her mother had returned to the house, she went and laid a gold locket on the window-sill. She had always worn this locket, and her initials were engraved upon it. This done, she went noiselessly away, her heart full of the bitterest regret, and looked back upon the dear old home, promising herself to come back to it often.

The next morning, when Adine's mother found the locket, her astonishment was past expression, and though until then she had always believed her daughter to be dead, she now began to hope that they would meet again. It seemed to her several times, at night, that she saw a shade wander about her dwelling; but so soon as she followed the phantom it immediately eluded her and fled away in the direction of the sea.

Two more years passed away without bringing any change in the sad life of the prisoner, but at the beginning of the third great preparations were made to give splendid fêtes at the court of the Queen of the Waves. White Foam

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was fourteen years old, and she was to "come out," as it is called in human society; that is, she was to make her appearance at the public festivities of the court. Every day there were dinners and state concerts, there was a ball every night, and in consequence of all the fuss and bustle which this occasioned, Adine was considered less necessary, had much more liberty, and kept as much as possible out of the way.

It was soon announced that the Princess's *trousseau* was ordered, for a Princess who had come out could not be dressed like one in the nursery; but it was very different to such an outfit as would be thought necessary on earth. It was to consist chiefly in valuable jewels, and the Queen promised that whoever brought the most precious thing should have in payment whatever he chose to ask.

When Adine knew of this promise, she thought that it might perhaps be an opportunity for regaining her liberty, and she set to work thinking hour after hour what she could procure that would be precious enough to exceed all the

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other gifts which would be offered to White Foam. After having tormented her imagination for a long time without finding anything, she fell into deep discouragement; she hardly slept at all, refused all food, and became so thin that the Seal thought she was going to die, and felt a great grief at the mere thought of it. At last he asked her questions, and she confessed the reason for her despair. "If I lose this chance which is offered me," she said, "I know well enough that I shall never see my mother again, and that I shall die far away from her, without a tear of hers upon my grave." Then the Seal tried to revive her hopes. "I will help thee, little one," he said, "and with our united wits we ought to succeed. Listen to me. I know the reefs where the ships are wrecked; I will plunge down into the depths near them and bring you all the rare and precious things I can find, and then we will make a choice."

Adine consented, and the same evening the Seal made a long voyage, and brought back many things of whose use and value he was ignorant, but which he submitted to Adine's

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more informed judgment. Three nights passed in this way, without any result worth speaking of; but on the fourth night the Seal brought a little box, which shut so well, and was so perfectly and carefully protected against the water, that there were good reasons for expecting to find something of value on opening it. The Seal waited impatiently for the lid to be taken off, but was much disappointed to see nothing inside but some bobbins of thread and silk. "Nothing better than that!" he exclaimed, with vexation, whilst Adine unwound some of them with care and attention. "I have never seen more beautiful thread for lace, nor finer silks," she answered, quite absorbed by some inner thought; "one would think they had been spun by fairies! . . . . Formerly I used to make lace very well, and I believe that if I tried again it would amuse me even yet. You see, good Seal, that your discovery will not be lost, as it will serve to occupy me."

This idea consoled him a little for his disappointment, and whilst one of the two dived

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and swam in search of precious things, the other made her lace.

Every day they talked at the court about the presents that were being prepared, for each hoped to give the most beautiful, and they jealously sought the biggest or purest pearl, the most transparent amber, the rarest corals. Adine alone worked in secret. She worked by herself on a little island, and said not a word to anybody.

One evening, however, she spoke thus to her confidant. "Good Seal, I've an idea that all the fine things they are going to offer to White Foam will give her but little pleasure, for she has seen such things from childhood, and I believe that she will attach little importance to a mere difference of size in a pearl; but if any one offered her something that she did not know at all, and which came from a world quite different from her own, don't you think she would appreciate it?"

"I do believe she would," replied the Seal; "the Princess is already quite used to all that her own empire produces, and, at all events,

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something new would attract her attention and interest her."

"That's just what I've been thinking, and for this purpose I've prepared her a veil of lace, so delicate that the very lightest breath of wind will lift it, and that it could pass through a wedding-ring. I shall embroider upon it the flowers and the birds of the earth with the silks that you have given me, and I shall give the flowers the tints of their petals, and the birds the colours of their feathers. See! I've begun already."

"Oh!" cried the Seal, "how beautiful it is! However can you, little one, make such things with those little fingers of yours?"

"What makes the beauty of this veil," she answered, "is the marvellous delicacy and the exquisite tints of the silks. I never saw anything comparable to them."

"One would fancy that he saw the flowers of the earth, and the butterflies that settle upon them!"

Nevertheless, this beautiful piece of work took a long time to do, and the poor little

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workwoman toiled all her nights through to finish it in time, so that she could no longer go to have glimpses of her mother and the old home on earth, and her heart was very sad. Sometimes it happened to her to think whether after all White Foam would pay the slightest attention to her gift; it might happen that she would not understand its merit, and would look upon it simply as a bit of stuff that was of no use to her. At these times she needed a great deal of courage to go on with her work.

The year was drawing near its end, only one day separated White Foam from her fifteenth year, and Adine doubled her ardour to put the last flower on her veil. She finished it just when the horizon was reddening with the first rays of morning. Satisfied with having completed this work of patience, she laid it out upon a little bush to judge of the effect that it would produce. At this moment a white form came from behind the bush, and said with an angry voice,—"So it is you, little mortal, who have taken the silks which belonged to me. Do you not know that they have been spun by

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the fairies of the air, and reserved for their use? I take back what belongs to me." As she said these words the Fairy seized the veil, and immediately flew away with it.

"Oh, pardon me, Madam, pity me!" cried Adine; "don't take away from me the labour of a whole year! It's the ransom of my liberty. It's my gift to the Princess White Foam."

But the Fairy answered, "I take only what belongs to me; but this evening I shall send you the price of your work, and you may offer it, if you like, as a gift to the Princess." She disappeared at these words, and left the poor child in consternation.

When the evening arrived each one was admitted to offer his present, and cries of admiration burst forth every minute, which made Adine wretched, for she alone had nothing to offer, as the Fairy had not kept her promise, and had not sent the price of the work.

The reception being at an end, White Foam was asked to make choice amongst the gifts, and to name the person who had a right to the

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favour promised by the Queen for having given what was most precious. The Princess hesitated a long time without being able to make up her mind. All the presents were equally magnificent, and it was difficult to come to a decision. She was disturbed by the Seal, who brought a very little box, which an unknown messenger had just given him, and which bore upon its lid the words—

ADINE'S GIFT.

The box had hardly been opened when a concert of exclamations burst forth at the sight of what it contained, and the Princess said, "This is the most precious of all the gifts, the gift without a rival!" On hearing these words Adine went nearer to look, and she could hardly restrain her joy and her surprise when she saw that it was her veil—the veil that she had embroidered; but, O marvel! the flowers exhaled their sweetest perfumes, the birds sang their liveliest melodies! Nobody could weary

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of listening and admiring; and Adine immediately obtained her liberty. Happy beyond all expression, she wanted to return to her mother immediately, but White Foam made her stay a little, that she might cover her with gifts in remembrance of her. She plunged her hands in the treasures spread out before her, and adorned her friend with them. Then they kissed each other tenderly and separated. The Seal, without a word, took Adine to the beach, and gave a long, lamenting moan of pain and sadness when he saw her walk away so quickly and leave him. She heard it, and came back and caressed him, that he might be consoled; but she promised to come often to the beach in the twilight, that she might see him again.

Adine's happiness, when she returned to her mother, was past description. She never left her again, and obeyed her always. Still, the people who took walks late in the evening upon the beach sometimes fancied that they saw in the twilight a slender form carried by a Seal towards a rocky island, where she was soon

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surrounded by singing phantoms; and they said to each other that they had been dreaming. Yet it was thus that Adine and White Foam met together on the night of the new moon.

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